

Sigāl'ovāda Sutta

The Discourse on the Advice to Sigāla

[The lay code of ethics and social responsibilities]

(Dīgha Nikāya 31/3:180-193)

Translated with notes by Piya Tan ©2003

1 Introduction

1.1 BACKGROUND. The Sigāl'ovāda Sutta is a classic text on lay ethics and social responsibilities, an exposition of the whole code of domestic and social duties of a layman according to the Buddhist point of view. It is often called by latter-day Buddhists as “the Householder’s Discipline” (*gihī,vinaya*).¹ Due to the universal appeal of this sutta, it is one of the earliest European translations we have of a Pali sutta: Paul Grimbolt (the French Consul in Ceylon) in *Sept Suttas Palis* (Paris, 1876); DJ Gogerly (a Wesleyan missionary), *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Ceylon Branch, 1847; and RC Childers, “The Whole Duty of the Buddhist Layman” in *Contemporary Review* (London, 1876).

Buddhaghosa, in his Commentary on the Sutta, relates how Sigāla’s parents were not only lay followers, but also stream-winners, but they could not persuade him to accompany them to hear the Dharma. Sigāla declared that he would have nothing to do with recluses because saluting them would make his back ache, stiffen his knees, and wear out his clothes having to sit on the ground. And having known the recluses, one has to invite them and give them donations, and so incurring losses upon oneself. Finally, the father, on his deathbed employed a skillful means. If a lay-follower’s son were to worship the directions (*disā namassana*), the Buddha and his disciples would surely notice him and teach him better things. And since one’s parent’s last wishes are to be honoured, the son obeyed. (DA 3:942)

1.2 SUTTA SUMMARY. The Sutta opens with the Buddha’s meeting Sigāla and their conversation [§§1-2]. After the summary or synopsis [§3a], the Buddha lists the four defilements of conduct [3b-4] and the four motives or biases [§§5-6]. These two brief sections are followed by more elaborate teachings. Section III deals with “Six ways of squandering wealth” where six dangers (*ādīnavā*) are listed for each of the six ways of loss (*apāya, mukhā*) [§§7-14]. Section IV deals with “four false friends and four true friends” which, following the same basic structure, lists four characteristics of a false friend [§§15-20] and of a true friend [§§21-26]. It is interesting to note that where usually the term “spiritual friend” (*kalyāṇa, mitta*) would be used (eg S 1:88, 5:29),² here we find “**true-hearted friend**” (*suhada, mitta*) [§§21-26]. This latter is a precursor of the spiritual friend.³

The Sutta climaxes and closes with the section on the six directions in relation to oneself [§§27-34], that is, a graphic presentation of a comprehensive code of social responsibilities and reciprocal ethics:

East	—	parents
South	—	teachers
West	—	wife and children
North	—	friends and colleagues
Nadir	—	slaves, servants, workers (the earth below)
Zenith	—	recluses and brahmins (the sky above)

The Sigāl'ovāda Sutta happily closes with the young Sigāla taking refuge in the Three Jewels.⁴

1.3 RELATED SUTTAS. Of the six directions [§§27-34], T W Rhys Davids remarks, “The symbolism is deliberately chosen: as the day in the East, so life begins with parents’ care; teachers’ fees and the

¹ For suttas related to the householder’s discipline, see **Dīgha, jānu S** (A 8.54/4:281-285) = SD 5.10 Introd.

² See Piya Tan, “True Friendship: Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana” in “The Buddha and His Disciples” lecture series, Singapore, 2002b: ch 3.

³ See **Group karma** = SD 39.1(7.1).

⁴ For related suttas, see **Ādiya S** (A 5.41/3:45 f) = SD 2.1 Intro (1).

South are the same word: *dakkhiṇa*; domestic cares follow when the youth becomes man, as the West holds the later daylight; North is 'beyond,' so by the help of friends, etc, he gets beyond troubles." (D:RD 3:180). The six directions are conflated into the three fires (*aggi*) in (**Uggata,sarīra**) **Aggi Sutta** (A 4.44):

- (1) the fire worthy of oblation (*āhuneyy'aggi*), ie one's parents;
- (2) the fire of the householder (*gahapat'aggi*), ie one's family;
- (3) the fire of religious offerings (*dakkhiṇeyy'aggi*), ie recluses and brahmins (viz religious practitioners) (A 4.44.12-16/4:45).⁵

The rationale for the Buddhist social ethics as embodied in the Sigāl'ovāda Sutta is the personal teaching (*attūpanāyikam dhamma,pariyāyam*), or what in modern philosophy is called "the golden rule," as taught in **the Veḷu,dvāreyya Sutta** (S 55.7).⁶ Stated positively, this entails that one should do to others that which one wishes others to do to one, or simply put, one should treat others (in a wholesome way) as one would treat oneself.

Sections of the Sigāl'ovāda Sutta are found elsewhere in the Sutta Piṭaka. The duties of a son, for example, is reworded in **the Ṭhāna Putta Sutta** (A 5.39) as *the reasons for parents to have a son*, thus:

Ṭhāna Putta Sutta

The Discourse of Reasons for Having a Son

(Aṅguttara Nikāya 5.39/3:43 f)

1 "Bhikshus, seeing these five reasons, parents wish for a son to be born in the family. What are the five?"

- 2 (a) 'Having been supported, he will support us in turn,' or
- (b) 'He will perform duties for us,' or
- (c) 'He will keep the family tradition standing long,'⁷ or
- (d) 'He will be worthy of his heritage,' or
- (e) 'He will make offerings (*dakkhiṇa*) to the dead and departed.'⁸

Seeing these five reasons, bhikshus, parents wish for a son to be born in the family.

Seeing these five reasons, the wise desire a son:

Having been supported, he will support us in turn; he will perform duties for us;
He will keep the family tradition standing long; he will be worthy of his heritage;
Or, that he will make offerings to the dead and departed.
Seeing these reasons the wise desire for a son.

Therefore, the peaceful true individuals are grateful, rejoicing in the favour:⁹

Recalling what parents have done in the past, they support them;
They do their duties to those who have done theirs in the past.
Nourished by support, they keep to admonitions, not forgetting family tradition.
The faithful son, accomplished in moral virtue, is worthy of praise. — evaṃ —

⁵ See (**Uggata,sarīra**) **Aggi S** in SD 3.16.

⁶ S 55.7.5/5:353 = SD 1.5 Intro (1).

⁷ Dīgha Comy ad D 28(c) says: By guarding the wealth and property gathered by one's parents, and if parents lack faith in the Dharma, one restores family honour by giving different types of donations (ticket food, etc) to the Order (DA 3:953).

⁸ That is, by dedicating merits to the departed. See **Jāṇussoṇī S** (A 10.177/5:269-273) = SD 2.6 & **Tirokuḍḍa S** (Kh 7/6) = SD 2.7.

⁹ "One grateful, etc," *kataññū kata,vedino*. I have rendered *-vedino* (from *-veda*) as "rejoicing," which suggests altruistic joy (*muditā*), rejoicing in the good of others: see **Agata,phala Mahānāma S** (A 6.10.2/3:285) = SD 15.3 Intro (4).

The Nakula,mātā Sutta (A 8.48) lists eight duties of the wife [cf §30]. These eight qualities which will secure for a woman birth amongst the Manāpa,kāyika devas (A 8.48/4:268 f)¹⁰ are in summary:

- (1) She serves, respect and loves her husband well.
- (2) She respects her husband's relatives.
- (3) She is capable and industrious in her work (especially in assisting her husband).
- (4) She manages her household duties well.
- (5) She takes good care of the goods and wealth that her husband brings home.
- (6) She is a lay disciple who has taken refuge in the Three Jewels.
- (7) She keeps the five precepts well.
- (8) She is a charitable person.

(A 8.48/4:268 f)

2 Worship of the six directions

TW Rhys Davids (D:RD), in the Introduction to his translation of the Sigāl'ovāda Sutta, notes that the Atharva Veda (3.26.27) identifies each "region" with a god—Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Soma, Viṣṇu, and Bṛhaspati.¹¹ In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa,¹² five as well as seven directions are mentioned in rites. In the Gṛhya Sūtras,¹³ the four quarters are to be worshipped in connection with certain rites. "And so much self-anointing or contact with water is enjoined that the lay celebrant may well have had both hair and garments wet as Sigāla had." (D:RD 3:170).¹⁴

A striking characteristic of some of them ancient Vedic gods can be seen from the brahminical texts. From the Brāhmaṇas onwards, certain gods are regarded as guardians of certain quarters. In this diagram, we see the placement of the gods literally *oriented*, that is, taking the east the principal quarter. The ancient Indians of the Buddha's time, where the magnetic compass¹⁵ was unknown, oriented themselves by facing the sun at dawn (the east). By that time, there was already the belief that all the quarters were the domains of different gods.¹⁶ The centre of all these quarters was the axis mundi (the cosmic centre), around which all the gods inhabit. The worshipper would understandably take himself (consciously or unconsciously) as the omphalos (navel) or axis mundi, and so worshipped these gods by paying homage to their respective directions.

In a description of the Vedic rites connected with the building of a house (*vāstu,śamana*), mention is, for instance, made of ten *bali*-offerings to be given to the protectors of the ten regions, namely Indra (in the east), Vayu, Yama, the Pitarah, Varuṇa, Mahārāja, Soma, Mahendra (north-east), Vasuki (the nadir) and Brahma (in the zenith). In Manu 5.96 these gods are Indra, Vāyu (the wind), Yama, the sun, Agni, Varuna, the moon, and Kubera. As such, the grouping of these great devas of the early Epic literature was not fixed.

¹⁰ In (**Manāpa,kāyika,devā**) **Anuruddha S** (A 8.46/4:262-266), it is recorded that these devas visit Anuruddha and try to entertain him with their powers of colours, sounds and happiness, but Anuruddha is not impressed. The Buddha later tells Anuruddha of the 8 qualities that enable women to be born amongst the Manāpa,kāyikā devas (A 4:265 ff). The two following suttas repeat the text with different interlocutors. In (**Manāpa,kāyika,devā**) **Visākhā S** (A 8.47), the Buddha teaches the same thing to the lady Visākhā (A 8.46/4:268). The **Nakula,mātā S** (A 8.48/4:268 f) follows, and this should be studied with **Sigāl'ovāda S** (D 31).

¹¹ See also Clasquin 1995:4 html ed.

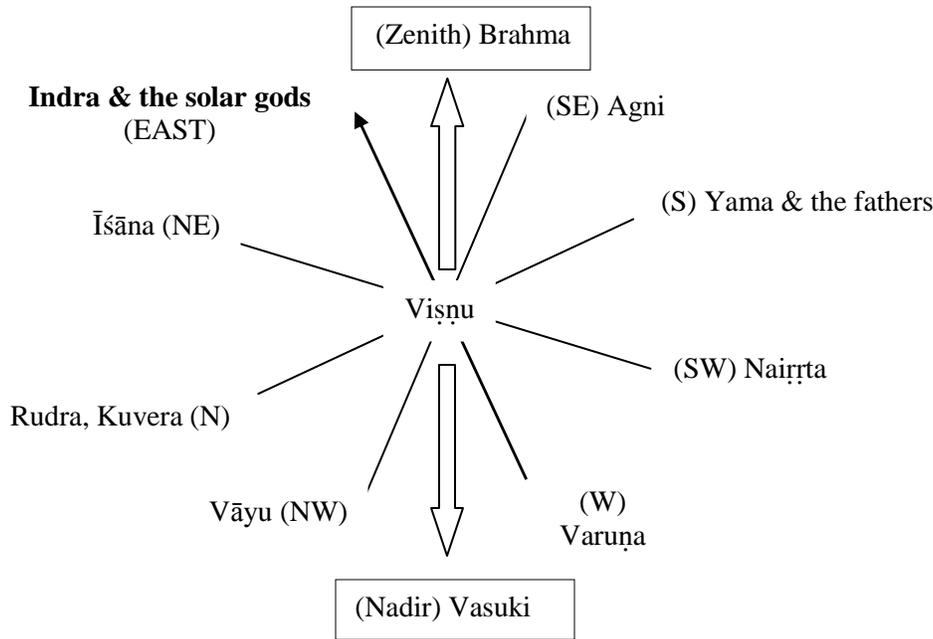
¹² SBE xii, 382; xliii, 277, 314.

¹³ SBE xxix, 320; cf 232; xxx, 171, 194, 313, 278.

¹⁴ It should be noted that the Pali Canon does not mention any of the "directional" gods of the Vedas. The names mentioned here are only examples so identified during a certain period in the theological development of Brahmanism.

¹⁵ For the magnetic compass, see §26 & n below.

¹⁶ See eg Ṛgveda 3.27.2; also S Bhattacharji 1970:6-9; J Gonda 1970:6.



3 Demythologization

Even before the days of modern demythologization, Rhys Davids then remarks,

The conversion from the invoking of animistically conceived nature-forces to that loving service to fellow-beings which is the truest worship of Deity, was the more easily effected because Sigāla's own convictions were not involved. (D:RD 3:171)

However, it should be noted that only three Vedas were known during the Buddha's time (see, for example, **the Tevijja Sutta**, D 13). The Atharva Veda is a less sophisticated collection of hymns, magic spells and incantations that remains partly outside the Vedic sacrifice and is a post-Buddhist compilation. However, its roots clearly lay in older traditions such as those reflected in the worship of the directions.

Michel Clasquin, in his paper, "Demythologisation in Axial Age India—the Singalovāda Suttanta,"¹⁷ gives an insightful study of the Sigāl'ovāda Sutta. Scholars and students of religion often associate the term demythologization (German *Entmythologisierung*) with the Lutheran theologian Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976),¹⁸ and the word did not enter into the English language until 1950.¹⁹ Clasquin explain "demythologization" as follows:

It refers to an effort to see beyond the specific, culturally defined mythical embellishments of religious teachings. It differs, however, from ordinary positivist debunking in that the intention of demythologising is not just to prove the myths factually wrong, but to discern a deeper, timeless meaning that is assumed to lie buried beneath layer upon layer of mythical material.

(Clasquin, 1995:1 html ed)

¹⁷ "Demythologisation in Axial Age India—the Singalovāda Suttanta." Unisa [University of South Africa] Press Online: *Myth and Symbol* 2 1995:19-38.

¹⁸ Here demythologization is the interpretation "of those parts of the Bible considered to be mythological (ie where the supernatural, transcendent is described in terms of the mundane, this-worldly) by understanding the essential existential truths contained in the imagery of the myth" (Huey & Corley, *A Student's Dictionary for Biblical and Theological Studies*, 1983:58). The Buddha's demythologization efforts are comparatively more radical in the sense that he actually gives *new* (often opposing) meanings to the old terms.

¹⁹ *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed 1989, 4:452.

Clasquin goes on to state that demythologization is not a modern process, but in the West goes as far back as Socrates and, in the East, the Buddha, that is, more specifically, the Sigālo’vāda Sutta (1995:2).

Clasquin further notes that the six directions, as demythologized by the Buddha “appear to display a clearly structured arrangement; they can be divided into a pair of triplets,” (1995:6 html ed) the first of which is the parents/teachers/wife triad. This early stage of a man’s life would in later Hinduism form the “celibate student” (or “bachelor” stage) of **the “stages of life”** (Skt *āśrama, dharma*). This would be followed by the “householder” stage (*gṛhastya*), when the youth takes a wife (Crawford, 1982:61-70). As Clasquin notes, these two stages (found in the first triad of parents/teachers/wife) is *diachronic* in nature, tracing a person’s passage through time. The following two stages of the “forest-dweller” (*vana, prastha*) and the “ascetic” (*sannyāsi*), both involving withdrawal from the household life were introduced later as a Hindu reaction partly against Buddhist monasticism.²⁰

The second triad of relationships involves one’s friends and companions, servants and co-workers, and religious practitioners (“recluses and brahmins”). This group, Clasquin notes, is *synchronic* in nature, “but shows a certain progression nonetheless. In this case, we observe an increase in formality.” (1995:6).

While Bultmann’s demythologization is *theological*, that of the Sigāl’ovāda Sutta is ethical—

...the Buddhist ethic is solidly based on the pan-Buddhist principle of interdependent causality. It might be summarized as follows: “You are free to do whatever you want: there will be consequences”. And these consequences are described in very positive terms, which is unusual for a Buddhist text. If we treat people in the ways prescribed, they will respond naturally and almost inevitably in very specific ways that will, incidentally, be to our benefit.

(Clasquin 1995:9 html ed)

Clasquin closes his study with this remark:

And this is the final irony: In Theravada Buddhist countries, the Sigālovāda Suttanta has become such a popular source of religious inspiration drawn from antiquity, it has served as such an eminent source of pro-social codes of conduct, that it has become a myth itself. Moreover, it has become a myth that is itself sorely in need of demythologisation. (Clasquin 1995:9)²¹

4 Buddhist financial management

§26, which marks the end of the first half of Sutta, dealing with personal ethics and friendship, closes with a remarkable statement on financial management:

*Catudha vibhaje bhoge
ekena bhoge bhuñjeyya
dvīhi kammaṃ payoje
catutthañ ca nidhāpeyya
āpadāsu bhavissati*

He divides his wealth into four:²²
One part he should enjoys,
With two he invests in his work,
And the fourth he should save
Should there be any misfortune.

In other words, we should “enjoy,” or use for daily purposes, a quarter (25%) of our income or wealth; half (50%) should be usefully invested; and the last quarter (25%) should be saved.

The first 25%, the quarter for personal use, is dealt with in **the Ādiyā Sutta** (A 5.41), which admonishes on “the five uses of wealth” (*pañca bhogānaṃ ādiyā*), namely:²³

²⁰ Cf P Olivelle 1993:7 & passim.

²¹ For a discussion from the angle of secularization, see (**Saṅgha**) **Uposatha S** (A 4.190) = SD 15.10b.

²² The text has the line *save mittāni ganthati* (“he truly binds his friends to himself”), but which fits better with the preceding quatrain: see main text below [§26].

²³ Some may interpret the “five uses of wealth” as applying to fourfold division [§26], ie, the *whole* of the pie-chart, but that effectively omits the investment and savings aspects.

- (1) personal and family use;
 - (2) for the benefit of friends;
 - (3) as security and insurance;²⁴
 - (4) the fivefold offering (*pañca, bali*): to relatives, to guests, to the departed, to the government (as payment of taxes, etc), and to devas;²⁵
 - (5) for supporting worthy religious.
- (A 5.41/4:45 f = SD 2.1)

These five offerings are actually traditional Indian social duties by way of offerings to relatives and guests, civic duty to the government (paying taxes, etc), and religious duties to the departed and the devas. These duties or offerings are not instituted by the Buddha but common non-Buddhist practices that were tolerated insofar as *they did not seriously conflict with Buddhist practice*.²⁶

Putting all these facts together, we can work out this pie-chart, from which we can deduce that we are admonished by the Buddha to set aside about 5% of our income or wealth for Dharma-spirited purposes:

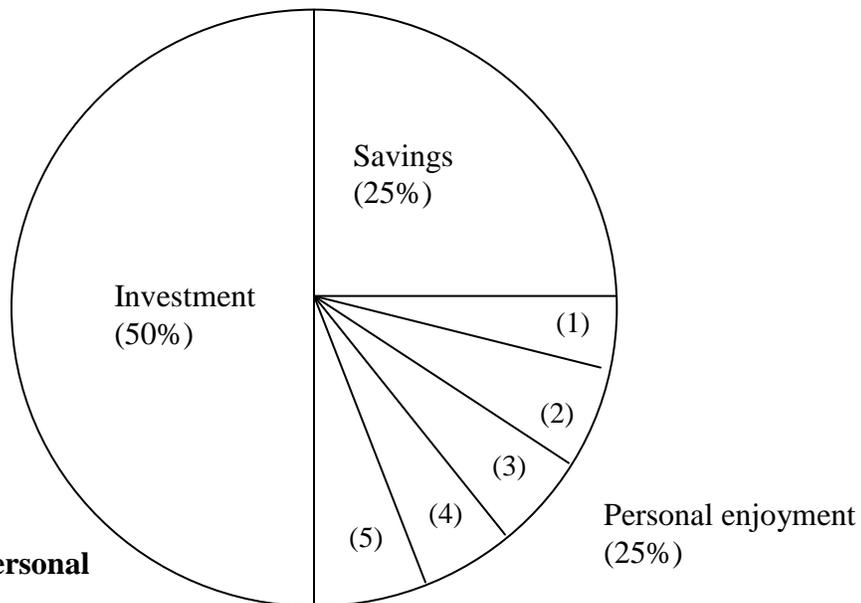


Fig 4 The Buddhist personal financial pie-chart

The bottom right quadrant constitutes “the five uses of wealth,” thus: (1) personal and family use; (2) for friends and guests; (3) for security and insurance; (4) the fivefold offering (social duties); and (5) for Dharma-spirited work. Assuming an equal division, each sub-sector will be 5% of our income or wealth. However, it should be understood that these five sub-sectors (as well as the other quadrants) do overlap in parts.

²⁴ “Insurance” here is def in **Ādiya S** (A 5.41) as follows: “Furthermore, householder, with wealth *thus gotten*, the noble disciple makes himself secure against all misfortunes whatsoever, such as may happen by way of fire, water, the king, robbers and bad heirs. He makes himself secure, keeping his goods in safety.” (A 5.41.4/3:45) = SD 2.1.

²⁵ This should *not* be misread as encouraging deva worship, but rather as the Buddha’s accommodating a social duty (*dharma*) of his days, insofar as it does not conflict with the Buddha Dharma. For a further discussion of this point, see **Ādiya S** (A 5.41/3:45 f) = SD 2.1 Intro (2-3).

²⁶ See eg (**Alabhanīya**) **Ṭhāna S** (A 5.48 stanzas) for the Buddha’s tolerant approach: see SD 2.1 Intro (4). On “transference of merit,” see **Jāṇussoṇī S** (A 10.177/5:269-273) = SD 2.6, esp Intro.

The **Dīgha,jānu Sutta** (A 8.54) explains the four bases of worldly welfare, which are here collated with the four worldly joys of a householder (*gihi,sukha*), as described in **the Anaṇa Sutta** (A 4.62), thus:

<u>Dīgha,jānu Sutta (A 8.54)</u>	<u>Anaṇa Sutta (A 4.62)</u>	<u>Spiritual welfare</u>
(1) The accomplishment of diligence	The joy of ownership.	Faith
(2) The accomplishment of watchfulness	The joy of enjoyment.	Moral virtue
(3) Spiritual friendship:	The joy of blamelessness.	Wisdom
(4) Balanced livelihood	The joy of debtlessness.	Charity

(A 8.54/4:281-285 = SD 5.10; A 4.62/2:69 f = SD 2.2)

(1) The Dīgha,jānu Sutta mentions **the accomplishment of diligence** (*uṭṭhāna,sampadā*) first, and in the Anaṇa Sutta, we can connect it to **the joy of ownership** (*atthi,sukha*). When you have worked hard and honestly for something, you feel a joyful satisfaction towards what you have earned. When you are joyful, it is easier to have a calm mind to study and investigate the Dharma, so that **wise faith** (*saddhā*) arises.

(2) **The accomplishment of watchfulness** (*ārakkha,sampadā*) protects the hard-earned wealth so that they are not lost or destroyed, making sure it is safe and well-insured against natural disasters, thieves, legal problems and exploitation. Then you can truly **enjoy your wealth** (*bhoga,sukha*) with loved ones and friends, and do acts of merit, such as supporting Dharma work, and so on. All this makes your effort to keep the precepts and enhance your **moral virtue** (*sīla*) all the easier and greater.

(3) **Spiritual friendship** (*kalyāṇa,mittatā*) is basically how true Buddhist practitioners relate one another, that is, in terms of spiritual welfare on account of faith, moral virtue, charity and wisdom. In this sort of relationship, there is a minimum of interpersonal issues and personal problems: there is **the joy of blamelessness** (*anavajja,sukha*), on account of the previous two qualities.

(4) **Balanced livelihood** (*sama,jīvitā*) means good economics, that is, keeping home and society in healthy social and financial order. We spend within our means, and yet enjoy the healthy benefits of our wealth with loved ones, friends, and others, and with a deep commitment to Dharma work and personal development. **The joy of debtlessness** (*anaṇa,sukha*) basically means we are free of financial debts, or in our own times, we can manage our loans well, even profit from it. Of course, if we have much surplus wealth, it is better not to have any debt at all. There is also the debt of kindness we owe others, and often we forget the people who had been kind to us sometime in our lives. If we merely return such kindness, we are *grateful*; but if we help others, even when we think they do *not* deserve it, then we are *compassionate* to them. In the long run, in this samsara, we somehow owe someone something; so, it makes sense to be kind to others, friends, strangers or foe.

5 Sigāla's parents

Sigāla,mātā ("Sigāla's mother") comes from a merchant banker (*seṭṭhi*) family in Rājagaha and, after marriage, has a son called Sigāla. She hears the Buddha's teaching and gaining faith, joins the Order. According to the Apadāna, the Buddha teaches her the sutta regarding the worship of the directions (evidently the Sigāl'ovāda Sutta) (Ap 2:603 f). Having listened to it, she becomes a streamwinner.

She is full of faith and goes to hear the Buddha teach so that she can gaze at his personal beauty. The Buddha, realizing her disposition, expedites her faith so that, in due course, she becomes an arhat. Later, she is declared the foremost of nuns who have won liberation by faith (*saddhādhimutānam*, A 1:25).

In the time of Padum'uttara Buddha, she belonged to a minister's family, and once went with her father to hear the Buddha's teaching. Full of faith, she entered the Order, and, hearing a nun declared as the foremost of those who had faith, she aspired to win the same honour (AA 1:381).

Sigāla,pitā ("Sigāla's father") is a householder of Sāvathī. He joined the Order, and the Buddha asks him to meditate on the perception of a skeleton. He lives in the Bhesakalā,vana in Sumsumāra,giri, where a forest deity encourages him with a verse (Tha 18). Thus inspired, he develops insight and becomes an arhat.

Ninety-four aeons ago he had given a palmyra or palm (*tāla*) fruit to the pratyeka buddha named Sata,raṁsī. In the time of Kassapa Buddha, he was a monk and developed meditation on the perception of a skeleton (ThaA 1:74 f).

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The Discourse on the Advice to Sigāla

(D 31/3:180-193)

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time the Blessed One was staying in the Squirrels' Feeding Ground in the Bamboo Forest near Rājagaha.

Sigāla worships the directions

At that time, Sigāla, the young householder,²⁷ having risen early in the morning²⁸ and left Rājagaha, was with wet clothes and wet hair, and with lotus palms worshipping the different directions, that is, the east, the south, the west, the north, the nadir and the zenith.²⁹

2a Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, entered Rājagaha for alms. The Blessed One saw Sigāla the young householder, having risen early in the morning and left Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, and with lotus palms saluting the different directions, that is, the east, the south, the west, the north, the nadir and the zenith. Seeing Sigāla the young householder the Blessed One said this to him:

2b “Young householder, why do you, having risen early in the morning and left Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, and with lotus palms salute the different [181] directions, that is, the east, the south, the west, the north, the nadir and the zenith?”

“Venerable sir, when my father was dying, he said: ‘Son, the directions should be worshipped.’ So I, venerable sir, honouring my father’s word, respecting it, valuing it, hallowing it, having risen early in the morning and left Rājagaha, was with wet clothes and wet hair, and with lotus palms saluting the different directions, that is, the east, the south, the west, the north, the nadir and the zenith.”

2c “But young householder, the directions are not to be worshipped in this manner in the noble one’s discipline.”

“In that case, venerable sir, how are the directions to be worshipped in the noble one’s discipline? It would be good if the Blessed One were to teach me that dharma [duty] regarding how the directions should be worshipped.”

“Then, listen, young householder, pay close attention, I will speak.”

“Yes, venerable sir,” the young householder replied in assent to the Blessed One.³⁰

Summary

3a The Blessed One said this:

“Young householder, the noble disciple
gives up the four defilements of conduct,³¹

²⁷ *Gaha.pati,putta*, “young householder” (DA 3:941). However, it is clear here that Sigāla’s father (Sigāla,pitā) has died a saint (Tha 18; ThaA 1:74 f)—and assuming that he is not another namesake—it would not be proper to call him a “householder’s” son. Moreover, as in *deva,putta*, “young deva” (D 2:12, 14; S 1:46 f, 216 f, 4:289; A 1:278; It 76), *gahapati,putta* fittingly translates as “young householder,” here, since Sigāla is now the head of the house, following his father’s renunciation and death. See n on *ayya,putta* at **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.6a/1:92) = SD 21.3 n.

²⁸ “Early in the morning,” *kālassa eva*.

²⁹ The ancient Indians of the Buddha’s time had no magnetic compass. They literally “orientate” (turn to the east) by facing the sun at dawn, calling that direction the “front” (*puratthima*). The right-hand right direction (*dakkhiṇa*) is the south; the direction at the back (*pacchima*) is the west; the left-hand direction is the north (*uttara*). See n to Plate 2 below.

³⁰ Apparently, there is an abrupt break here, ie, §§3b-26 . Originally, this section probably continues immediately with §27.

does no evil deeds out of the four motives,³²
 does not indulge in the six ways of squandering wealth³³—

through avoiding these fourteen evil ways, he covers³⁴ the six directions, and he is on his way to conquering both worlds, successful both in this world and in the next. When the body has broken up after death, he arises in a heavenly world.

I. THE FOUR DEFILEMENTS OF CONDUCT

3b What are **the four defilements of conduct** that he has given up?

Young householder, they are:³⁵

- (1) The defilement of deed that is the harming of life;
- (2) The defilement of deed that is the taking of the not-given;
- (3) The defilement of deed that is sexual misconduct;
- (4) The defilement of deed that is the uttering of false speech.

—These are the four defilements of conduct that he has given up.”

The Blessed One said this.

4 Having said that, the Sugata [well-gone], the Teacher, further said this: [182]

The harming of life, taking the not-given, and uttering falsehood,
 And going with the women of others—these the wise praise not.

II. THE FOUR MOTIVES

5 “By which **four motives** [grounds]³⁶ does he do no evil deed?

- (1) He does no evil deed led by the bias of desire;³⁷
- (2) He does no evil deed led by the bias of hate;
- (3) He does no evil deed led by the bias of delusion;
- (4) He does no evil deed led by the bias of fear.

Because the noble disciple, young householder, is not led by the bias of desire, nor led by the bias of hate, nor led by the bias of delusion, nor led by the bias of fear, he does no evil deed through these four motives.”

The Blessed One said this.

6 Having said that, the Sugata [well-gone], the Teacher, further said this:

Whoever by desire, hate, fear, delusion	<i>Chandā dosā bhayā mohā</i>
Transgresses the Dharma	<i>yo dhammaṃ ativattati</i>
His fame wanes	<i>niḥīyati yaso tassa</i>
Like the moon during the dark half.	<i>kāḷa,pakkh'eva candimā</i>

³¹ “Defilements of conduct,” *kamma,kilesa*, lit “defilements of karma”; alt tr “vices of conduct” (Prayudh Payutto, 1969). These refer to actions of body and of speech, ie moral virtue (*sīla*).

³² “Out of... motives,” *thānehi*, or “for... the reasons”.

³³ “Ways of squandering wealth,” *bhogānaṃ apāya,mukhāni*, or “the sources of loss of wealth.”

³⁴ “Covers,” *paṭicchadi*, lit “get...covered,” protect.

³⁵ Listed here are the first 4 of the five precepts, the fifth being the precept against taking drinks and intoxicants, which is discussed in §§7-8.

³⁶ “Motives” (*thānā*), here syn with *agati*, lit “not coming,” ie wrong course or “bias”, conditioned by the four motives here (V 1:339; Vism 683).

³⁷ *Chandāgatim gacchanto pāpa,kammaṃ na karoti*. *Chanda* normally tr neutrally as “desire” but here is used in the negative sense, meaning “sense-desire”. *Agati* has been rendered as “bias”. *Gacchanto* here lit tr as “going (by)” and is idiomatically rendered as “led by,” “by way of” or “because of”. Alt tr: “He does no evil by way of being led by desire”.

Whoever by desire, hate, fear, delusion
Transgresses not the Dharma
His fame waxes
Like the moon during the bright half.

*Chandā dosā bhayā mohā
yo dhammaṃ nātivattati
āpūrati yaso tassa
Sukka,pakkh'eva candimā ti.*

III. SIX WAYS OF SQUANDERING WEALTH

7 **HOW WEALTH IS LOST.** “What are the six ways of squandering wealth that he does not indulge in?³⁸

- (1) **The addiction to strong drinks, distilled drinks, fermented drinks and that which causes heedlessness,³⁹ young householder, is a way of squandering wealth.⁴⁰**
- (2) **Roaming (and loitering) the streets at unseemly hours is a way of squandering wealth.**
- (3) **Frequenting fairs [or shows] is a way of squandering wealth.**
- (4) **Addiction to gambling, a basis for heedlessness,⁴¹ is a way of squandering wealth.**
- (5) **Associating with evil friends is a way of squandering wealth.**
- (6) **The habit of idleness is a way of squandering wealth.**

8 (1) These, young householder, are the six dangers from the addiction to strong drinks, distilled drinks, fermented drinks and that which causes heedlessness:

- (a) The immediate (and visible) loss of wealth.
- (b) An increase of quarrels.
- (c) The likelihood of illness.
- (d) It is a source of disgrace. [183]
- (e) The indecent exposure of oneself.
- (f) It weakens one's intelligence.

These, young householder, are the six dangers from the addiction to strong drinks, distilled drinks, fermented drinks and that which causes heedlessness.

9 (2) These, young householder, are the six dangers from the habit of roaming the streets at unseemly hours:

- (a) He is himself without guard or protection.
- (b) His wife and children [family] are without guard or protection.
- (c) His wealth is without guard or protection.
- (d) He is liable to be suspected of evil deeds [and crimes].
- (e) He falls prey to false rumours.
- (f) He is flooded by numerous troubles.

These, young householder, are the six dangers from the habit of roaming the streets at unseemly hours:

³⁸ These vices are also those of an evil friend (*pāpa,mitta*) who is a “reckless companion” [§19]. The **Dīgha,jānu S** (A 8.54) gives a summary of 4 ways of squandering wealth: (1) womanizing; (2) addiction to drinking; (3) addiction to gambling; (4) bad company (A 8.54.8-9/4:283 f) = SD 5.10.

³⁹ “Strong drinks...that causes heedlessness,” *sura,meraya,majja-p,pamāda-ṭ,thāna*, also tr as “strong drinks, distilled drinks and fermented drinks that causes heedlessness.” Comy says that there are five kinds of “strong drinks” (*surā*): made from crushed seeds (*piṭṭha,surā*), from cakes (*pūva,surā*), from rice (*odana,surā*), from fermented yeast (*kiṇṇa,pakkhita,surā*), from a mixture of ingredients (*sambhāra,samīyutta,surā*) (DA 3:944; VvA 73; VbhA 381). Comy also says there are 5 kinds of “distilled drinks” (*meraya = āsava*): made from flowers (*pupph'āsava*), from fruits (*phal'āsava*), from honey (*madhv-āsava*), from sugar (*gul'āsava*), and from a mixture of ingredients (*sambhāra,samīyutt'āsava*) (DA 3:944). **Majja** seems to be a general term for “drinks”. However it is likely that *majja* is the weakest of the three, while *surā* is the strongest. On when the precept against intoxicants is not breached, see Pāc 51 (V 4:110).

⁴⁰ “A way of squandering wealth,” *bhogānaṃ apāya,mukhaṃ*, also “a way of losing wealth.”

⁴¹ “Gambling, a basis for heedlessness,” *jūta-p,pamāda-ṭ,thāna*.

10 (3) These, young householder, are the six dangers from frequenting fairs [or shows].⁴²

- (a) 'Where is there dancing?'
- (b) 'Where is there singing?'
- (c) 'Where is there music playing?'
- (d) 'Where is there a talk show [or story-telling]?'
- (e) 'Where is there hand-clapping [hand music]?'⁴³
- (f) 'Where is there drum-beating?'⁴⁴

These, young householder, are the six dangers from frequenting fairs [or shows].



Plate 1. Indian drums: The duggi and the tabla.

11 (4) These, young householder, are the six dangers from addiction to gambling, a basis for heedlessness:

- (a) When one wins, one begets hatred.⁴⁵
- (b) When one loses, one regrets one's loss.
- (c) There is immediate [and visible] loss of wealth.
- (d) One's word carries no weight in an assembly.
- (e) One is looked down by friends and colleagues.
- (f) One is not sought after for marriage, for how could a person addicted to gambling support a wife?

These, young householder, are the six dangers from addiction to gambling, a basis for heedlessness.

12 (5) These, young householder, are the six dangers from associating with evil friends:

One has friends and companions such as these—

- (a) The gamblers.
- (b) The libertines.
- (c) The drunkards.
- (d) The cheats.⁴⁶
- (e) The swindlers.⁴⁷
- (f) The violent. [184]

These, young householder, are the six dangers from associating with evil friends.

⁴² The questions below suggest that such a person is perpetually dissatisfied and emotionally empty.

⁴³ "Hand-clapping," *pāni-s,sara*, lit "hand sound." See **Brahma,jāla S**, D 1.1.13/1:6.

⁴⁴ "Drum-beating," *kumbha,ṭhūna*, a type of drum, probably an ancestor of the modern tabla and duggi.

⁴⁵ Cf: "Victory breeds hatred. | The defeated lives in pain. | The peaceful lives happily, | Having given up both victory and defeat." (Dh 201)

⁴⁶ *Nekatikā*, one who cheats another through disguise (*paṭirūpakena vañcanakā*, DA 3:947).

⁴⁷ *Vañcanikā*, ie one who cheats another face to face (*sammukhāvañcanāhi vañcanikā*, DA 3:947).

13 (6) These, young householder, are the six dangers from the habit of idleness.⁴⁸

- (a) He avoids work, saying, ‘It’s too cold.’
- (b) He avoids work, saying, ‘It’s too hot.’
- (c) He avoids work, saying, ‘It’s too late.’
- (d) He avoids work, saying, ‘It’s too early.’
- (e) He avoids work, saying, ‘I’m too hungry.’
- (f) He avoids work, saying, ‘I’m too full.’

—Thus much of what he should do remains undone: his wealth grows not, and the wealth that he has slips away.

These, young householder, are the six dangers from the habit of idleness.”

The Blessed One said this.

14 Having said that, the Sugata [well-gone], the Teacher, further said this:

There is the bottle friend,⁴⁹
 There is the one who merely says, ‘Dear friend! Dear friend!’
 But there’s one who’s a friend indeed when one’s in need:
 A companion that’s a friend, too!

Sleeping late, consorting with the women of others,
 Given to anger and given to frivolous deeds,
 Evil friends and stinginess—
 These six things ruin a person.

The man who has an evil friend or evil companion,
 Who resorts to evil ways,
 Comes to ruin in both worlds,
 In this world and in the next.

Gambling and women, drinking, dancing and singing,
 Sleeping by day, roaming about for fun at unseemly times,
 Evil friends and stinginess—
 These six things ruin a person.

Those who delight in gambling, who take strong drinks,
 Who go to women dear as life to others, [185]
 Who associate with those of low morals,⁵⁰ not with the wise—
 They wane⁵¹ like the moon in the dark half.

The drunkard, without wealth, having nothing,
 Who haunts bars, thirsting after drinks,
 Will sink into debt like a stone in water
 Will quickly be without family [and home].

⁴⁸ These 6 negative points should be read in pairs: ab concern the weather or the temperature (personal comfort); lines cd concern the time or duration of work; ef concern one’s own physical condition.

⁴⁹ “Bottle friend,” *pāna, sākhā*, ie “drinking partner.”

⁵⁰ “Who associate with those of low morals,” *nihīna, sevī*, lit “who associate with the low.” This is a wordplay to link it to the verb *nihīyati* (falls into ruin or “fades (away)”) in the next line.

⁵¹ “They wane,” *nihīyati*, lit “he goes down, falls into ruin, is destroyed”.

Who habitually sleeps [or dreams] by day,
 Who hates rising in the night [before dawn],⁵²
 Ever drunk and loose
 Is unfit to lead a household life.

Who thus says: 'It is too cold;⁵³
 It is too hot; it is too late,'
 Thus leaving his work undone,
 Opportunities slip by these men.

Whoever regards cold and heat
 No more than he does a blade of grass,
 And does his work as a man should—
 His happiness will never fall away.

IV. FOUR FALSE FRIENDS AND FOUR TRUE FRIENDS

A. False friends

15 “Young householder, there are these four who should be known as enemies in the guise of friends:

- (1) **The downright taker**,⁵⁴ young householder, should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend
- (2) **The mere talker**,⁵⁵ young householder, should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend.
- (3) **The sweet-talker**,⁵⁶ young householder, should be known as enemy in the guise of a friend.
- (4) **The destructive companion**,⁵⁷ young householder, should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend.

Young householder, these are the four who should be known as enemies in the guise of friends.

16 (1) **The downright taker**, young householder, [186] should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend for these four reasons:

- (a) He merely takes without ever giving.
- (b) With little, he desires much.
- (c) He does what needs doing only out of fear.
- (d) He serves only his own ends.

The downright taker, young householder, should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend for these four reasons.

17 (2) **The mere talker**, young householder, should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend for these four reasons:

⁵² “Who detests rising at night,” following Be & Se reading: *rattin-uṭṭhāna, dessinā*; so Comy (DA 3:948).

⁵³ These last two quatrains are identical to those ascribed to Mātāṅga,putta (Tha 74/231 f).

⁵⁴ “The downright taker,” *añña-d-atthu, haro*, lit “one who merely takes away,” the out-and-out robber.

⁵⁵ “The mere talker,” *vacī, paramo*, lit “who is word at best,” “a man of much profession” (DPL), one who merely pays lip-service, an empty vessel, an insincere person.

⁵⁶ “The sweet-talker,” *anuppiya, bhāṇī*, lit “speaker of what is pleasant,” one who says what others like to hear, one who is politically correct at best, a flatterer, a toady.

⁵⁷ “The companion who destroys one’s wealth,” *apāya, sahāya*, lit “a companion who leads one to loss”; Comy: “a companion who brings about loss of wealth” (*bhogānaṃ apāyesu sahāyo hoti*, DA 3:948), a wastrel. Qu at J 2:390,19*.

- (a) He claims to having been hospitable in the past.⁵⁸
- (b) He promises hospitality in the future.⁵⁹
- (c) He worms his way with empty favours.⁶⁰
- (d) When you need help, he feigns his own misfortune.⁶¹

For these four reasons, young householder, the mere talker should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend.

18 (3) The sweet-talker, young householder, should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend for these four reasons:

- (a) He approves of your doing wrong.
- (b) He approves of your doing right [or disapproves of it, depending on what profits him].⁶²
- (c) He sings your praises to your face.
- (d) He runs you down behind your back.

For these four reasons, young householder, the sweet-talker should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend.

19 (4) The destructive companion, young householder, should be known as enemy in the guise of a friend for these four reasons:⁶³

- (a) He is your companion in taking strong drinks, distilled drinks, fermented drinks and that which causes heedlessness.
- (b) He is your companion in roaming [and loitering in] the streets at unseemly hours.
- (c) He is your companion in frequenting fairs [or shows].
- (d) He is your companion in indulging in gambling, a basis for heedlessness.

For these four reasons, young householder, the destructive companion should be known as an enemy in the guise of a friend.”

The Blessed One said this.

20 Having said that, the Sugata [well-gone], the Teacher, further said this:⁶⁴

The friend who merely takes,
And the friend who only talks,
And the one who sweet-talks,
And the companion who brings destruction—
These four are not friends.
Thus the wise should know:
They should be avoided from afar
Like a dangerous path. [187]

⁵⁸ *Atītena paṭisantharati*, lit “he is hospitable with the past.” Comy: He sweetly claims, “So much maize was set aside for you. We waited by the road but you did not come. Now it has gone bad.” (DA 3:949).

⁵⁹ *Anāgatena paṭisantharati*, lit “he is hospitable about the future.” Comy: He sweetly claims, “This time we have good maize and loads of fruit. We will be sure to set aside a pile of maize for you.” (DA 3:949).

⁶⁰ *Niratthakena saṅgaṇhāti*, ie he displays kindness but it is an empty promise.

⁶¹ *Paccupannesu kiccesu vyasanam dasseti*, lit “he points to his misfortune in what is to be done now.” Comy: If you need a cart, he claims it has broken a wheel, etc (DA 3:949).

⁶² All MSS have vll reading either *kalyāṇam pi’ssa anujānāti* or *kalyāṇam pi’ssa nānujānāti*. Both Be (VRI) and Se (BUDSIR) edd read *anujānāti*, which is preferred as it reflects the moral nonchalance of the false friend. Alt tr: “He does not consent to your doing good.” Although this characteristic may at times apply to him, considering the fact that (d) “He runs you down behind your back,” the false friend, being a sycophant, is more likely to be a sort of “yes-man.” In the ultimate, both readings apply here since such a person would both approve or disapprove of one’s doing good, depending on whether it benefits him.

⁶³ These four reasons are also the ways of squandering one’s wealth [§7].

⁶⁴ This verse is qu at **Puṭa, dūsaka J**, where W H D Rouse gives a charming tr: *The friend who robs another without ceasing; / He that protests, protests incessantly; / The friend who flatters for the sake of pleasing; / The boon companion in debauchery;— / These four the wise as enemies should fear, / And keep aloof, if there be danger near.* (J 280/2:290).

B. True friends

21 “Young householder, there are these four who should be known as true-hearted friends:⁶⁵

- (1) **The helper** (*upakāra*) should be known as a true-hearted friend.
- (2) **The one constant in joy and in sorrow** (*samāna, sukha, dukkha*)⁶⁶ should be known as a true-hearted friend.
- (3) **The good counsellor** (*atth'akkhāyī*) should be known as a true-hearted friend.
- (4) **The caring** (*anukampaka*) should be known as a true-hearted friend.

22 (1) **The helper**, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons:⁶⁷

- (a) He guards you when you are heedless.⁶⁸
- (b) He guards your property when you are heedless.
- (c) He is a refuge to you when you are in fear [or danger].
- (d) When you have tasks to complete, he provides you with double the supply you need.⁶⁹

The helper, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons.

23 (2) **The one constant in joy and in sorrow** [a friend through thick and thin] should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons:

- (a) He tells you his secrets.
- (b) He keeps your secrets.
- (c) He does not abandon you in your troubles.⁷⁰
- (d) He would even give his life for you.

The one who is constant in joy and sorrow, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons.

24 (3) **The good counsellor** [the one who shows benefits or the goal] should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons:⁷¹

- (a) He restrains you from evil.
- (b) He exhorts you to do good.
- (c) He lets you hear what you have not heard before.
- (d) He shows you the way to heaven.

The good counsellor, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons.

25 (4) **The caring**⁷² should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons:

- (a) He does not delight in your misfortunes.
- (b) He delights in your good fortunes.

⁶⁵ “True-hearted friends” *suhadā mittā*, or “friends with good hearts”: see **Dūta S** (A 8.16) = Intro (8.2). Here the context is social one. For “spiritual friend” (*kalyāṇa, mitta*), on a more spiritual level, see SD 8.1. **The Ṭhānāni S** (A 4.192) lists and defines these 4 ways of truly knowing a person: (1) through living with another, another’s moral virtue is known; (2) through dealing with another, another’s honesty is known, (3) through adversities, another’s fortitude [moral strength] and (4) through discussing with another, his wisdom is known (A 4.192/2:187-190) = SD 14.12.

⁶⁶ Alt trs: “the one who shows benefits,” “the shower of the goal.”

⁶⁷ The first three qualities below are given as part of those reciprocal qualities that your “friends and companions” should show you [§31fgh].

⁶⁸ Comy: “When he sees that you have fallen in the middle of town or at the city gate or on the road after having taken some drinks, he sits down by you until you wake, lest your clothes be stolen.” (DA 3:949)

⁶⁹ *Uppannassa kicca, karaṇīyesu tad diguṇaṃ bhogaṃ anuppādeti.*

⁷⁰ This is also the reciprocal quality that your “friends and companions” should show you [§31i].

⁷¹ These duties are almost identical to those of the recluses and brahmins reciprocating the son of family [§33f-k].

⁷² “Caring,” *anukampaka*, fr the verb *anukampati* = *anu* (after) + *kampati* (shake, tremble), lit “he shakes or trembles along after (someone)” (D:RD 3:171).

(c) He prevents others from speaking ill of you.

(d) He commends others who speak well of you.

The one who is compassionate, young householder, should be known as a true-hearted friend for these four reasons.”

The Blessed One said this.

26 Having said that, the Sugata [well-gone], the Teacher, further said this: [188]

The friend who is a helper,
And the friend in weal and woe,
And the friend who gives good counsel,
And the caring friend—
These four are (true) friends,
Thus the wise should know
And devote himself with respect
As a child would his parents.

The wise accomplished in moral virtue,
Glows like a fire on a hill-top,⁷³
Building his wealth
The way bees do,⁷⁴
His wealth piles up
The way an anthill grows,
Having gathered his wealth thus
He is ready for family and home—
Truly he binds his friends to himself.⁷⁵

**He divides his wealth into four:
One part he should enjoy,⁷⁶
With two he invests in his work,
And the fourth he should save
Should there be any misfortune.**



Plate 2. Ancient Chinese (“south-pointer”) compass (around 200 BCE)⁷⁷

⁷³ Comy: That is, like a fire burning on a hill-top at night (DA 3:951).

⁷⁴ An allusion to Dh 49.

⁷⁵ *Save mittāni ganthati*: this line actually comes after the next line, “He divides his wealth into four,” but fits better with the preceding quatrain. Cf **Aḷavaka S** (S 10.12): “How does one bind friends to oneself?...By giving, one binds friends” (S vv850, 852/10.12/1:214 f).

⁷⁶ *Ekena bhoge bhūñjeyya*. Buddhaghosa thinks that of these four, the first is the best for doing skillful acts since one could both donate to monks, the destitute and travellers, and also pay the weavers, bathmen, etc [ie for personal services] (DA 3:952). See Intro (4).

V. THE SIX DIRECTIONS

27 “And how, young householder, should the noble disciple cover⁷⁸ **the six directions**?⁷⁹

Young householder, these should be regarded as the six directions, namely:⁸⁰

- (1) **Parents** should be regarded as the front direction [the east].
- (2) **Teachers** should be regarded as the direction to the right [the south]. [189]
- (3) **Wife and children** should be regarded as the direction at the back [the west].
- (4) **Friends and companions** should be regarded as the superior direction [the north].
- (5) **Slaves, labourers and workers** [employees and charges] should be regarded as the direction below [nadir].
- (6) **Ascetics and brahmins** [religious renunciants and practitioners] should be regarded as the direction above [zenith].

28 (1) In five ways, young householder, **parents** as the front direction [the east], should be ministered to by a son [or daughter], considering:⁸¹

- (a) ‘Having been supported by them, I will support them in turn.’
- (b) ‘I will do their work for them.’
- (c) ‘I will keep the family tradition.’⁸²
- (d) ‘I will myself be worthy of my heritage.’
- (e) ‘And I will make offerings (*dakkhiṇa*) to the dead and departed.’⁸³

⁷⁷ Some of the earliest Chinese records show a spoon-shaped compass made of lodestone or magnetite ore, called a “south-pointer” (指南針 *zhǐ nán zhēn*), dating back to the Han Dynasty (2nd century BCE to 2nd century CE). The spoon-shaped device is placed on a cast bronze plate called a “heaven-plate” (also called diviner’s board or compass board, *luópān*) that has the eight trigrams (*bāguà*) of the *Yījīng* (I-ching), as well as the 24 directions (based on the constellations), and the 28 lunar mansions (based on the constellations dividing the Equator). Often, the Big Dipper (Great Bear) is drawn within the centre disc. The square symbolizes earth and the circular disc symbolizes heaven. Upon these are inscribed the azimuthal points (compass bearings) relating to the constellations. Its primary use is that of geomancy (*fēngshuǐ*, “wind-water,” prognostication and placement) to determine the best location and time for such things as burials. In a culture that places extreme importance on reverence for ancestors, this remains an important tool well into the 19th century on the mainland. Even in modern times there are those who use this divination concepts *fēngshuǐ* for locating and design of buildings or fortuitous times and locations for almost any enterprise. It is said that the first Chin emperor used the divining board and compass in court to affirm his right to the throne. Primarily, the compass was used for geomancy for a long time before it was used for navigation. (Based on Susan Silverman AC: see http://www.smith.edu/hsc/museum/ancient_inventions/compass2.html.)

⁷⁸ “Cover,” *paṭicchadi*, lit “get...covered,” protect.

⁷⁹ The six directions are conflated into the three fires (*aggi*) in (**Uggata,sarīra**) **Aggi S** (A 4.44): (a) the fire worthy of oblation (*āhuneyy’aggi*), ie one’s parents; (b) the fire of the householder (*gahapat’aggi*), ie one’s family; (c) the fire of religious offerings (*dakkhiṇeyy’aggi*), ie recluses and brahmins (viz religious practitioners) (A 4.44.-12-16/4:45). See (Uggata,sarīra) **Aggi S** in SD 3.16.

⁸⁰ In Pali, the 6 directions (*disā*) are respectively: *puraṭṭhima*, *dakkhiṇa*, *pacchima*, *uttara*, *heṭṭhima* and *uparima*. Rhys Davids remarks: “The symbolism is deliberately chosen: as the day [begins] in the East, so life begins with parents’ care; teachers’ fees and the South are the same word: *dakkhiṇa*; domestic cares follow when the youth becomes man, as the West holds the later daylight; North is ‘beyond,’ so by the help of friends, etc, he gets beyond troubles.” (D:RW 3:180 n4).

⁸¹ This whole section, forms a sutta called **Ṭhāna Putta S** (A 5.39/3:43) = Intro (1), restated as a parent’s reasons for having a son.

⁸² *Kula,vamsam ṭhappessāmi*. “The family tradition,” *kula,vamsa*, ie, by guarding the wealth and property gathered by one’s parents, and if parents lack faith in the Dharma, one restores family honour by giving different types of donations (ticket food, etc) to the Order (DA 3:953). Cf *kula,vamsam ciram ṭhassati* (“He will keep the family tradition standing long” (**Ṭhāna Putta S**, A 5.39/3:43).

⁸³ *Atha vā pana petānam kāla,katānam dakkhiṇam anuppadassāmī*, ie by dedicating merits to the departed.

The parents, young householder, as the front direction [the east], having been ministered thus by the son [or daughter] show them their⁸⁴ compassion in these five ways, thus:⁸⁵

- (f) They restrain him from evil.
- (g) They exhort him to do good.
- (h) They have him trained in a profession.⁸⁶
- (i) They arrange for his marriage to a suitable wife [suitable husband].⁸⁷
- (j) They hand over his inheritance in due time.⁸⁸

In these five ways, young householder, the parents, as the front direction [the east], having been ministered thus by the son [or daughter] show them their compassion.

Thus the front direction [the east] is covered by him and made safe and secure.

29 (2) In five ways, young householder, **teachers** as the direction on the right [the south], should be ministered to by the student, thus:

- (a) By rising (in salutation).
- (b) By waiting upon them.
- (c) By eagerness to listen [to learn].
- (d) By personal service.
- (e) By learning the arts [and professions]⁸⁹ with respect.

The teachers, young householder, as the direction to the right [the south], having been ministered thus by the student,⁹⁰ show him their compassion in these five ways:

- (f) They discipline him so that he is well-disciplined.
- (g) They teach him so that he is well-taught and learned.
- (h) They ensure that he is learned in every art and learning.⁹¹
- (i) They introduce him to friends and companions.
- (j) They provide him with safety in every quarter.

In these five ways, young householder, **[190]** the teachers, as the direction to the right [the south], having been ministered thus by the student, show their compassion.

Thus the direction to the right [the south] is covered by him and made safe and secure.

30 (3) In five ways, young householder, **the wife**⁹² as the direction at the back [the west], should be ministered to by the husband, thus:⁹³

- (a) By treating her with respect.
- (b) By not showing her discourtesy.
- (c) By not being unfaithful to her.
- (d) By handing over authority to her.⁹⁴

⁸⁴ This is a common-gender plural.

⁸⁵ Duties (f) & (g) are identical to those of the recluses and brahmins reciprocating the son of family's goodness [§33fg].

⁸⁶ "Profession," *sippa*, lit "the arts," but here, following Comy, it has been rendered so. Comy says that the son is trained in the family profession such as conveyancing [transfer of property], accounting, etc (DA 3:953).

⁸⁷ *Paṭirūpena dārena saṃyojenti*, lit "they have him bound to a suitable woman," which is said in reference to Indian society in the Buddha's time. In contemporary terms, this has to be contextualize to "they let their son or daughter find a suitable spouse."

⁸⁸ That is, at proper times and at death (DA 3:953).

⁸⁹ Here *sippa* apparently refers to "education" in general. Cf n to §28h.

⁹⁰ "Student," *antevasī*, lit "inmate," ie a resident student, apprentice.

⁹¹ This refers to a well-balanced (even cross-disciplinary) curriculum.

⁹² "Wife," *bhāriyā*, but above [§27] given as "wife and children," *putta,dārā*, lit "wife and son," or "women and children," which reflects the social conditions of the Buddha's days. In our own times, it would be appropriate to contextualize this to "family". Similarly, "husband," *sāmika*, lit "owner" should here be contextualize in a gender-neutral way ("spouse") to reflect the current situation.

⁹³ On the idea couple, see **Sama,jīvi S** (A 4.55/2:61 f). On compatibility of couples, see **Samvāsa S** (A 4.54/2:59-61).

(e) By providing her with adornments.⁹⁵

The wife, young householder, as the direction at the back [the west], having been ministered thus by the husband shows him her compassion in these five ways:⁹⁶

(f) She manages her work very well.

(g) She is hospitable to those around her [such as servants and husband's relatives].⁹⁷

(h) She is not unfaithful to him.

(i) She looks after the household stores [and property].⁹⁸

(j) She is skillful and diligent in all her duties.

In these five ways, young householder, the wife, as the direction at the back [the west], having been ministered thus by the husband, shows him her compassion.

Thus the direction at the back [the west] is covered by him and made safe and secure.

31 (4) In five ways, young householder, **friends and companions** as the superior direction [the north] should be ministered to by the son of family, thus:⁹⁹

(a) With generosity.

(b) With pleasant [courteous] speech.

(c) With beneficial conduct [in looking after their welfare].

(d) With impartiality [treating them as he would treat himself].

(e) By not going back on his word.

Friends and companions, young householder, as the superior direction [the north], having been ministered thus by the son of family, show him their compassion in these five ways:¹⁰⁰

(f) They guard him when he is heedless.

(g) They guard his property when he is heedless.

(h) They are a refuge to him when he is in fear [or danger].

(i) They do not abandon him in his troubles.¹⁰¹

(j) They respect his family members.¹⁰²

In these five ways, young householder, friends and companions, as the superior direction [the north], having been ministered thus by the son of family, show him their compassion.

Thus the superior direction [the north] is covered by him and made safe and secure.

⁹⁴ See **Kula S** (A 4.255/2:249) on the successful family life.

⁹⁵ *Alaṅkārānuppadāna* = *alaṅkāra* + *anuppadāna*. The verb for *alaṅkāra* is *alaṅ, karoti*, meaning (a) to adorn; (b) to dress oneself, to put on; (c) to content oneself with (CPD); here appears to be a wordplay connoting that the husband should keep his wife happy and contented.

⁹⁶ **The Nakula, māṭā S** (A 8.48) gives virtues of a woman that would bring her rebirth amongst the Manāpa-, kāyikā devas (A 8.48/4:268 f). These virtues are an elaboration of the 5 given here.

⁹⁷ "The servants [and husband's relatives]," *parijana*, lit "the people around," ie "attendants, servants, retinue, suite" (PED) but Comy explains as "husband's relatives" (DA 3:955).

⁹⁸ Including goods brought back by her husband.

⁹⁹ The first four items below are called *saṅgha, vatthu*, the four conditions (*dāna, peyya, vajja, attha, cariya, samān'attatā*) for the integration of a group or of society, or consolidating friendship, partnership and unity. (D 3:152, 232; A 2:32, 248, 4:218, 363). **The (Saṅgha) Paññā, bala S** (A 9.7/4:363-365) explains them as follows (a) The gift of Dharma is the foremost gift (cf Dh 354a); (b) The foremost of pleasant speech (*piya, vācā* or *peyya, vajja*) is the teaching of the Dharma again and again to those who desire for it and listen attentively; (c) The foremost of beneficial conduct (*attha, cariyā*) is to rouse, instill, establish faith (*saddhā*) in the faithless; to rouse, instill, establish moral virtue (*sīla*) in the immoral; to rouse, instill, establish charity (*cāga*) in the miser; to rouse, instill, establish wisdom (*paññā*) in the foolish [ignorant]; (d) The foremost impartiality is a stream-winner's **impartiality** towards a stream-winner, a once-returner's impartiality towards a once-returner, a non-returner's impartiality towards a non-returner, an Arhat's impartiality towards an arhat. See (Saṅgha) Paññā Bāla S in SD 2003:2.21.

¹⁰⁰ Qualities (f), (g), and (h) are part of those of the true-hearted friend who is "a helper" [§22(1)].

¹⁰¹ This is a quality of the true-hearted friend "who is the same in joy and in pain" [§23(2)].

¹⁰² "Other family members," *apara, paja*, lit "other generation," which Comy explains as "one's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, such as organizing auspicious occasions for them" (DA 3:956).

32 (5) In five ways, young householder, **slaves, labourers and workers** [employees and charges]¹⁰³ as the direction below [nadir], **[191]** should be ministered to by the master, thus:¹⁰⁴

- (a) By allocating work according to the strength of the worker.
- (b) By providing them with food and wages.¹⁰⁵
- (c) By attending to their medical and health needs.¹⁰⁶
- (d) By sharing excellent tastes [food, etc] with them.¹⁰⁷
- (e) By giving them timely breaks and holidays.¹⁰⁸

The slaves and labourers [employees and charges], young householder, as the direction below [the nadir],¹⁰⁹ having been ministered thus by the master, show him their compassion in these five ways:

- (f) They rise before him.
- (g) They retire after him.
- (h) They take only what is given.
- (i) They do their work well.
- (j) They spread about his good name and praise.¹¹⁰

In these five ways, young householder, the slaves and labourers [employees and charges], as the direction below [the nadir], having been ministered thus by the master, show him their compassion.

Thus the direction below [the nadir] is covered by him and made safe and secure.

33 (6) In five ways, young householder, **ascetics and brahmins [religious renunciants and practitioners]** as the direction above [zenith],¹¹¹ should be ministered to by the son of family, thus:

- (a) By physical acts of lovingkindness.
- (b) By words of lovingkindness.
- (c) By thoughts of lovingkindness.
- (d) By keeping the house open to them.
- (e) By providing them with material needs.

The ascetics and brahmins [religious renunciants and practitioners], young householder, as the direction above [the zenith], having been ministered thus by the son of family, show him their compassion in these six ways:¹¹²

- (f) They restrain him from evil.
- (g) They exhort him to do good.
- (h) They, with a good mind, show him compassion.
- (i) They let him hear what he has not heard before.
- (j) They clarify what he has heard.

¹⁰³ Slavery evidently existed in Indian society of the Buddha's time and these instructions reflect his attempt at manumission (the emancipation of slavery), or at least their humane treatment.

¹⁰⁴ "Master," *ayyira*, an unusual form, probably "clerical contamination of *ayya*" (CPD: *ayyira-kula*). The better reading is perhaps *ayira(ka)*, from *ariya* or *ayya*, a nobleman, lord, sir, master. On the metathesis, see Müller, *Simplified Grammar of the Pali Language*, London, 1884:49.

¹⁰⁵ This is one of the earliest documented statement on a fair wage scheme and perks.

¹⁰⁶ This is one of the earliest documented statement on a medical aid scheme.

¹⁰⁷ *Acchariyānaṃ rasānaṃ saṃvibhāgena*, lit "by giving a portion of marvellous tastes." Comy mentions "honey" as an example (DA 3:956). *Rasa* has a wide range of meanings including "juice, taste, object of enjoyment (entertainment), flavour and its substances (eg soup)" (PED). One could take all these meanings as applicable here.

¹⁰⁸ Comy: Giving them enough rest so that their work is better performed without working all day, and giving special leave during festivals, etc, providing them with extra food and adornments for the occasion (DA 3:956).

¹⁰⁹ "Nadir," ie the earth below, representing the material support and services provided by this quarter.

¹¹⁰ *Kitti.vaṇṇa,harā ca*, lit "and they are bearers of fame and praise."

¹¹¹ "Zenith," ie the sky above, representing the potential for personal and spiritual development and liberation.

¹¹² Significantly, while all the other "directional" duties come in sets of 5 (*pañcahi*), the spiritual teacher's duties are 6 (*chahi*) in number. The spiritual teacher's duties are similar to those of the true-hearted friend "who gives good counsel" [§24] and the first two duties here are those of the parents to their child [§28fg]. In other words, the spiritual teacher is also wise parent and loving friend all rolled into one.

(k) They show him the way to heaven.

In these six ways, young householder, the ascetics and brahmins [religious renunciants and practitioners], as the direction above [the zenith], having been ministered thus by the son of family, show him their compassion.

Thus the direction above [the zenith] is covered by him and made safe and secure.”

The Blessed One said this.

34 Having said that, the Sugata [well-gone], the Teacher, further said this:

Mother and father are the direction in front,
 Teachers are the direction on the right,
 Wife and children are the direction at the back, [192]
 Friends and companions are the north,
 And slaves and labourers the nadir,
 Ascetics and brahmins the zenith—
 These are the directions to be honoured
 By one who would be fit to be a householder in his clan.

The wise one, accomplished in moral virtue,
 Refined and eloquent,
 Humble, free from pride—
 Such a one wins fame.

The early riser, industrious,
 Unshaken by troubles,
 Flawless in conduct, wise—
 Such a one wins fame.

Hospitable, a maker of friends,
 Wise in words, free from stinginess,¹¹³
 Fore-runner, leader, guide,¹¹⁴—
 Such a one wins fame.

Generosity and pleasant speech,¹¹⁵
 And beneficial conduct here,
 And impartiality towards all things,
 Everywhere as is fitting—

These are what holds the world together
 Like a linch-pin holding the chariot-wheel;
 Without such welfare
 No mother would receive from her son
 Any honour or respect
 Nor the father from his son.

But since there are these things
 The wise regard¹¹⁶ as welfare, [193]

¹¹³ *Vadaññū vīta, maccharā*, this line (*pada*) as in **Macchhari S** (S vv166 f/1:34).

¹¹⁴ *Netā vīnetā anunetā*, lit “one who leads, who leads away, who leads after,” ie one who is wiser than others, keeps others away from evil, and sets an example himself (ie as a follower himself).

¹¹⁵ This verse is about the 4 conditions of welfare (*saṅgaha, vatthu*): namely, generosity (*dāna*), pleasant speech (*piya, vācā*), beneficial conduct (*attha, cariyā*) and impartiality (*samānatattā*) (D 3:152, 232; A 2:32, 248, 4:218, 363).

¹¹⁶ “Regard,” *samavekkhanti* = *sam* + *avekkhati* (he looks) (M 1:225; A 2:32; It 30).

Therefore they bring greatness,
And win their praises.

35 When this was said, Sigāla the young householder said this to the Blessed One:

“Excellent, venerable sir! Excellent, venerable sir! Just as if one were to place upright what had been overturned, or were to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the Blessed One.

I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a layman who has gone to him for refuge from this day forth for life.”

—evam—

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