AN 4.87 — AN 4:87 The Son | Putta Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/AN/AN4_87.html

Source revision: sha256:06db98f11dbe5b66e3b290b0f8bcaa44ec5f2fe3d1e1b74062fcf0baea044036

License: CC-BY-NC-4.0 — https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

License URL: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Copyright: Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017

License notice: Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported. To see a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. “Commercial” shall mean any sale, whether for commercial or non-profit purposes or entities. Questions about this book may be addressed to Metta Forest Monastery Valley Center, CA 92082-1409 U.S.A. Additional resources More Dhamma talks, books and translations by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu are available to download in digital audio and various ebook formats at dhammatalks.org. Printed copy A paperback copy of this book is available free of charge. To request one, write to: Book Request, Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082 USA.

Attribution: From Handful of Leaves, Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu; https://www.dhammatalks.org/Archive/Writings/Ebooks/SuttaPitaka_251113.epub. Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported. To see a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. “Commercial” shall mean any sale, whether for commercial or non-profit purposes or entities. Questions about this book may be addressed to Metta Forest Monastery Valley Center, CA 92082-1409 U.S.A. Additional resources More Dhamma talks, books and translations by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu are available to download in digital audio and various ebook formats at dhammatalks.org. Printed copy A paperback copy of this book is available free of charge. To request one, write to: Book Request, Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082 USA.

Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

The Son

Putta Sutta (AN 4:87)

“Monks, these four persons are to be found existing in the world. Which four? The unshakeable contemplative, the white-lotus contemplative, the red-lotus contemplative, the most refined contemplative among contemplatives.

“And how is a person an unshakeable contemplative? There is the case where a monk is one who practices the way of one in training. He remains intent on the unsurpassed safety from bondage. Just as the eldest son of a head-anointed noble-warrior king—one due to be anointed but not yet anointed—would have attained unshakeable [confidence in his future anointing], in the same way, the monk is one who practices the way of one in

training. He remains intent on the unsurpassed safety from bondage. This is how a person is an unshakeable contemplative.

“And how is a person a white-lotus contemplative? There is the case where a monk—through the ending of effluents—enters & remains in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized it for himself right in the here & now. But he doesn’t remain touching the eight emancipations with his body.1 This is how a person is a white-lotus contemplative.

“And how is a person a red-lotus contemplative? There is the case where a monk—through the ending of effluents—enters & remains in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized it for himself right in the here & now. And he remains touching the eight emancipations with his body. This is how a person is a red-lotus contemplative.

“And how is a person the most refined contemplative among contemplatives?

There is the case where a monk often uses a robe when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. He often consumes almsfood when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. He often uses a lodging when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. He often uses medicinal requisites for curing the sick when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. His fellows in the holy life with whom he lives often treat him with agreeable bodily actions, and rarely with disagreeable ones. They often treat him with agreeable verbal actions… agreeable mental actions, and rarely with disagreeable ones. They often present him with what is agreeable, and rarely with what is disagreeable. Painful feelings coming from bile, phlegm, wind, or their combination, and those produced by climate, careless behavior, assault, or the result of kamma do not often arise in him. He has few diseases. He attains—whenever he wants, without strain, without difficulty—the four jhānas that are heightened mental states, pleasant abidings in the here & now. Through the ending of effluents, he enters & remains in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized it for himself right in the here & now. This is how a person is the most refined contemplative among contemplatives.

“And, monks, if anyone, speaking rightly, were to say, ‘He is the most refined contemplative among contemplatives,’ it’s of me that, speaking rightly, he would say it. For I often use a robe when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. I often consume almsfood when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. I often use a lodging when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. I often use medicinal requisites for curing the sick when asked to, and rarely when not asked to. My fellows in the holy life with whom I live often treat me with agreeable bodily actions, and rarely with disagreeable ones. They often treat me with agreeable verbal actions… agreeable mental actions, and rarely with disagreeable ones. They often present me with what is agreeable, and rarely with what is disagreeable. Painful feelings coming from bile, phlegm, wind, or their combination, and those produced by changes in the weather, uneven care of the body, attacks, or the result of kamma do not often arise in me. I have few diseases. I attain—whenever I want, without strain, without difficulty—the four jhānas that are heightened mental states, pleasant abidings in the here

& now. Through the ending of effluents, I enter & remain in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized it for myself right in the here & now. If anyone, speaking rightly, were to say, 'He is the most refined contemplative among contemplatives,' it's of me that, speaking rightly, he would say it.

"These, monks, are four persons to be found existing in the world."

Note

1. See DN 15. The Commentary states that this passage refers to a dry-insight arahant, one who hasn't attained any of the jhānas. However, the "stream" that a stream-enterer has entered contains all eight factors of the noble eightfold path. One of these factors is right concentration, which consists of the four jhānas. So if every stream-enterer has experienced at least the first jhāna, and stream-entry is a lower attainment than arahantship, every arahant must have experienced at least the first jhāna as well.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 70; SN 12:70; AN 6:43; AN 9:43–45