Kp 4 — Khp 4 Sāmaṇera Pañhā — The Novice’s Questions

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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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

Khp 4. Sāmaṇera Pañhā — The Novice’s Questions

What is one?

All beings subsist on nutriment. [There are these four nutriments for the establishing of beings who have taken birth or for the support of those in search of a place to be born. Which four? Physical nutriment, gross or refined; contact as the second, intellectual intention the third, and consciousness the fourth.]

What is two?

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.” {SN 12:2}]

What is three?

The three types of feeling [pleasant, painful, neither pleasant nor painful].

What is four?

The four noble truths [stress, the origination of stress, the cessation of stress, the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress].

What is five?

The five aggregates [form, feeling, perception, fabrications, consciousness].

What is six?

The six internal sense media [eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, intellect].

What is seven?

The seven factors for awakening [mindfulness, analysis of qualities, persistence, rapture, calm, concentration, equanimity].

What is eight?

The noble eightfold path [right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration].

What is nine?

The nine abodes for beings [“Seven stations of consciousness and two dimensions:

“There are beings with multiplicity of body and multiplicity of perception, such as human beings, some devas, and some beings in the lower realms. This is the first station of consciousness.

“There are beings with multiplicity of body and singularity of perception, such as the devas of the Brahma hosts generated by the first (jhāna). This is the second station of consciousness.

“There are beings with singularity of body and multiplicity of perception, such as the Radiant Devas. This is the third station of consciousness.

“There are beings with singularity of body and singularity of perception, such as the Beautiful Black Devas. This is the fourth station of consciousness.

“There are beings who, with the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of multiplicity, [perceiving,] ‘Infinite space,’ arrive at the dimension of the infinitude of space. This is the fifth station of consciousness.

“There are beings who, with the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of space, [perceiving,] ‘Infinite consciousness,’ arrive at the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. This is the sixth station of consciousness.

“There are beings who, with the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, [perceiving,] ‘There is nothing,’ arrive at the dimension of nothingness. This is the seventh station of consciousness.

“The dimension of non-percipient beings and, second, the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. These are the two dimensions.” {DN 15}]

What is ten?

Endowed with ten qualities, one is called an arahant. [“The right view of one beyond training, the right resolve of one beyond training, the right speech of one beyond training, the right action of one beyond training, the right livelihood of one beyond training, the right effort of one beyond training, the right mindfulness of one beyond training, the right concentration of one beyond training, the right knowledge of one beyond training, the right release of one beyond training.” {MN 117}]1

Note

1. The Novice’s Questions is one of only two passages in Khp that do not also appear in an identical form elsewhere in the Canon. (The other is passage 8, The Reserve Fund.) However, it is similar to the series of questions presented in AN 10:27–28. For a discussion of the differences among these passages, see Skill in Questions, appendix 2.