Snp 4.10 — Sn 4:10 Before the Break-up (of the Body)

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

4:10 Before the Break-up (of the Body)

“Seeing how,

behaving how,

is one said to be

at peace?

Gotama, tell me about

—when asked about—

the ultimate person.”

The Buddha:

“Free from craving

before the break-up

[of the body],

independent

of before

& the end, 1

not classified in between, 2

no preference is his.

Un- angered,

un- startled,

un- boastful,

un- anxious,

giving counsel unruffled,

he is a sage,

his speech

under control.

Free from attachment

with regard to the future,

not sorrowing

over the past,

he sees seclusion

in the midst of sensory contacts.3

He can’t be led

in terms of views.4

Withdrawn, un-

deceitful, not

stingy, not

miserly, not

insolent, in-
offensive,
he doesn’t engage in
divisive speech.

Not drunk on enticements,
nor given to pride,
he’s gentle, quick-witted,
beyond conviction & dispassion.5

Not in hopes of material gain
does he take on the training;
when without material gain
he isn’t upset.

Unobstructed by craving,
he doesn’t through craving6
hunger for flavors.

Equanimous—always—mindful,
he doesn’t suppose himself
equal,
superior,
inferior,
in the world.
No swellings of pride
are his.

Whose dependencies
don’t exist
when, on knowing the Dhamma,
he’s in-
dependent;

in whom no craving is found
for becoming or not-:
He is said
to be at peace,
un-intent
on sensual pleasures,
with nothing at all
to tie him down:
one who's crossed over attachment.

He has no
children
cattle,
fields,
land.
In him you can't pin down
what's embraced
or rejected.7
He has no preference
for that which people run-of-the-mill
or brahmans & contemplatives
might blame—
which is why
he is unperturbed
with regard to their words.

His greed gone,
not miserly,
the sage
doesn't speak of himself
as among those who are higher,

equal,

or lower.

He,

theory-free,

goes to no theory.

For whom

nothing in the world

is his own,

who doesn't grieve

over what is not,

who doesn't enter into

doctrines

phenomena8:

He is said

to be

at peace."

vv. 848–861

Notes

1. Nd I: "Independent of before & the end" = no craving or view with regard to past or future.

2. For discussions of how the awakened one cannot be classified even in the present, see MN 72 and SN 22:85–86.

3. Nd I: "He sees seclusion in the midst of sensory contacts" = he sees contact as empty of self. This passage may also refer to the fact that the awakened person experiences sensory contact as if disjoined from it. On this point, see MN 140 and MN 146, quoted in The Mind Like Fire Unbound, chapter 4.

4. See AN 10:93.

5. Beyond conviction & dispassion—The Pali here can also mean, "A person of no conviction, he does not put away passion." This is an example of the kind of pun occasionally used in Pali poetry for its shock value. Other examples are at Dhp 97 and the

end of Sn 4:13. For examples of what is meant by being beyond conviction, see SN 12:68 and SN 48:44. For an explanation of what is meant by being beyond dispassion, see Sn 4:6, note 2. An alternate explanation is that, as Sn 5:6 indicates, the arahant is beyond all dhammas, dispassion included.

6. The Pali word taṇhāya—by/through craving—functions here as a lamp.

7. This reading follows the Thai and PTS editions: attaṁ vā-pi nirattaṁ vā. The Burmese and Sri Lankan editions read, attā vā-pi nirattā vā: "self or what's opposed to self." The first reading seems preferable for two reasons: First, it follows the theme established in Sn 4:3 and Sn 4:4 (and also followed in Sn 4:15 and Sn 5:11) that the awakened person has gone beyond embracing or rejecting views. Second, the word nirattā is found nowhere else in the Canon aside from the two other verses in Sn (4:3 and 4:14) where it is offered as a possible alternative reading for niratta (released, rejected). As niratta is clearly the preferable alternative in Sn 4:3, I have adopted it here and in Sn 4:14 as well.

8. "Doctrines, phenomena"—two meanings of the Pali word, dhamma.