

Dhammavinaya
INSTITUUT

Dhamma Study and Meditation

(In English)

SD.2023.03. Action and result (*kamma* and *vipāka*)
New Birth (*bhava*, *jāti*)

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Action and result (*kamma* and *vipāka*)

Overview

- *kamma* - [√kar + ma] action; deed; doing
- *vipāka* - [vi + √pac + a] result; outcome; consequence; fruit; lit. ripening
- *kamma-vipāka* - fruit of actions; results of (one's) deeds
- *kammavipāka* is not punishment or reward imposed by a higher power, a mystical being, or a god that man must accept in powerless submission.
- According to the law of action, an action (*kamma*) is an **intentional** act done by a person in the past or present, the fruit of which (*kamma-vipāka*) returns to the doer in one way or another, either in this life or in some subsequent life.

The formation of kamma

- The causes of kamma (nidānani kammānaṃ samudayāya):
 - ➔ greed (*lobha*), anger (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*)
 - ➔ non-greed (*alobha*), non-hatred (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*)
- Any deed that emerges from greed, anger, or delusion – born, sourced, and originated from greed, anger, or delusion – is unskillful, blameworthy, results in suffering, and leads to the creation of more deeds, not their cessation
- Any deed that emerges from non-greed, non-anger, or non-delusion – born, sourced, and originated from non-greed, non-anger, or non-delusion – is skillful, blameless, results in happiness, and leads to the cessation of more deeds, not their creation.

Kamma is caused by contact (*phassa*)

- In the „Nibbedhika-sutta“ AN 6.63, the Buddha teaches that contact (*phasso*) is the origin of the cause of action (*nidāna-sambhava*).
- There are defilements that lead to rebirth in (1) hell, (2) the animal realm, (3) the ghost realm, (4) the human world, and (5) the world of the gods.

*atthi, bhikkhave, āsavā **nirayagamanīyā**,*

*atthi āsavā **tiracchānayanigamanīyā**, atthi āsavā **pettivisayagamanīyā**,*

*atthi āsavā **manussalokagamanīyā**, atthi āsavā **devalokagamanīyā**.*

kamma and vipāka

Pleasant/unpleasant - useful/harmful

UNPLEASANT AND HARMFUL

therefore it should not be done for both reasons (unpleasant and harmful)

01

02

PLEASANT AND HARMFUL

the intelligent person does not do it, but the childish does, and it turns out to be harmful to the childish

UNPLEASANT AND USEFUL

the childish does not do it, but a smart one does, and doing it is useful for a smart person

04

03

PLEASANT AND USEFUL

therefore it should be done for both reasons (pleasant and useful).

RESULTS

„Mahākammapavibhaṅga-sutta“ | MN 136

Dhammavinaya
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The 4 types of persons

01

They kill living creatures, steal, and commit sexual misconduct. They use speech that's false, divisive, harsh, or nonsensical. And they're covetous, malicious, and have wrong view



When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a place of loss, a **bad** place, the underworld

02

They kill living creatures, steal, and commit sexual misconduct. They use speech that's false, divisive, harsh, or nonsensical. And they're covetous, malicious, and have wrong view



When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a **good** place, a heavenly realm.

03

They refrain from killing living creatures, stealing, committing sexual misconduct, or using speech that's false, divisive, harsh, or nonsensical. And they're contented, kind-hearted, and have right view



When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a **good** place, a heavenly realm.

04

They refrain from killing living creatures, stealing, committing sexual misconduct, or using speech that's false, divisive, harsh, or nonsensical. And they're contented, kind-hearted, and have right view



When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a place of loss, a **bad** place, the underworld

„Cūḷakammavibhaṅga-sutta“ | MN 135

Action (<i>kamma</i>)	Resulting in this life itself (<i>ditta damma vēdaniya</i>)	Firstly result (<i>vipāka</i>) They're reborn in bad place (<i>apāya, duggatim vinipātam nirayam</i>)	Secondary result (<i>vipāka</i>) If return to the human realm
Who kills living creatures	live with fear and hatred	reborn in bad place	he is short-lived
Who gives up killing living creatures	free from fear and hatred	reborn in good place	he is long-lived
Who habitually hurts living creatures	live with unplesant mind	reborn in bad place	live sickly
Who does not habitually hurt living creatures	live with plesant mind	reborn in good place	live healthy
Who is irritable and bad-tempered	live with hatred mind	reborn in bad place	become ugly
Who isn't irritable and bad-tempered	live with loving kindness	reborn in good place	become beautiful
Who is jealous	live with hurted heart	reborn in bad place	live without entourage support
Who is not jealous	live with happy and zets	reborn in good place	live with entourage support

„Cūḷakammavibhaṅga-sutta“ | MN 135

Action (<i>kamma</i>)	Resulting in this life itself (<i>ditta damma vēdaniya</i>)	Firstly result (<i>vipāka</i>) condition to death thought	Secondary result (<i>vipāka</i>) condition to result
Who gives donations to monks	people respect and love	reborn in good place	become weltheir
Who does not gives donations to monks	people separate from him	reborn in bad place	become poor
Who is not obstinate and vain, who honour to respectable ones	live in respect	reborn in good place	born in higher birth
Who is obstinate and vain, not-honour to respectable; ones	live without having respect	reborn in bad place	born in lower birth
Who approaches to a bhikkhu to ask what is skillful and what is unskillful	having higher knowldge	reborn in good place	born with higher wisdom
Who do not approaches to a bhikkhu to ask what is skillful and what is unskillful	having lawer knowldge	reborn in bad place	born with lower wisdom

The Buddha emphasized taking **personal responsibility** for developing and purifying the mind

The evil is done by oneself;
by oneself one becomes impure.
The evil is undone by oneself;
by oneself one becomes pure.
Purity and impurity depend on oneself.
No one can purify another.

*attanā hi kataṃ pāpaṃ
attanā saṅkilissati;
attanā akataṃ pāpaṃ,
attanāva visujjhati;
suddhī asuddhi paccattaṃ,
nāñño aññaṃ visodhaye.*

KN Dhp 165

The Buddha declares that his is a teaching of kamma (*kamma-vāda*), a teaching of the efficacy of action (*kiriya-vāda*), a teaching of (spiritual) effort (*viriya-vāda*).

„Tittthāyatana-sutta“ | AN 3.61

(„Sectarian Tenets“)

3 false views or „the doctrine of non-action“ (*a-kiriya-vāda*), that everything is caused by (1) past karma, (2) by a creator God, or (3) by chance all lead to inaction, which the Buddha refuted with dependent arising.

1. „There are, bhikkhus, some ascetics and brahmins who hold such a doctrine and view as this: „Whatever this person experiences – whether pleasure, pain, or neither-pain-nor-pleasure – all that is caused **by what was done in the past.**““
[= determinism (everything is due to past action)]
2. ... „Whatever this person experiences – whether pleasure, pain, or neither-pain-nor-pleasure – all that is caused **by God’s creative activity.**“
[= theism (everything is due to God)]
3. ... „Whatever this person experiences – whether pleasure, pain, or neither-pain-nor-pleasure – all that occurs **without a cause or condition.**“
[= fatalism (nocauality)]

„Tittthāyatana-sutta“ | AN 3.61

(„Sectarian Tenets“)

Who teach and hold such a view: „Whatever a person experiences, whether pleasurable, painful or neutral, all that is **caused by past action**“, in that case, Venerables,

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| (1) it is due to past action, | there will be | those who destroy life |
| (2) it is due to past action, | there will be | those who take the not-given |
| (3) it is due to past action, | there will be | those who are incelibate |
| (4) it is due to past action, | there will be | speakers of false speech |
| (5) it is due to past action, | there will be | speakers of divisive speech |
| (6) it is due to past action, | there will be | speakers of harsh speech |
| (7) it is due to past action, | there will be | speakers of useless talk |
| (8) it is due to past action, | there will be | the covetous |
| (9) it is due to past action, | there will be | the malevolent |
| (10) it is due to past action, | there will be | those with false views |

Furthermore, bhikkhus, one who falls back on **past action** as the decisive factor will lack the desire and effort, thus: „This should be done. This should not be done.“

„Tittthāyatana-sutta“ | AN 3.61

(„Sectarian Tenets“)

Who teach and hold such a view: „Whatever a person experiences, whether pleasurable, painful or neutral, all that is **caused by God’s creation**“, in that case, Venerables,

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| (1) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | those who destroy life |
| (2) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | those who take the not-given |
| (3) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | those who are incelibate |
| (4) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | speakers of false speech |
| (5) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | speakers of divisive speech |
| (6) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | speakers of harsh speech |
| (7) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | speakers of useless talk |
| (8) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | the covetous |
| (9) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | the malevolent |
| (10) it is due to God’s creation, | there will be | those with false views |

Furthermore, bhikkhus, one who falls back on **God’s creation** as the decisive factor will lack the desire and effort, thus: „This should be done. This should not be done.“

„Tittthāyatana-sutta“ | AN 3.61

(„Sectarian Tenets“)

Who teach and hold such a view: „Whatever a person experiences, whether pleasurable, painful or neutral, all that is **uncaused and unconditioned**“, in that case, Venerables,

- | | | |
|--|---------------|------------------------------|
| (1) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | those who destroy life |
| (2) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | those who take the not-given |
| (3) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | those who are incelibate |
| (4) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | speakers of false speech |
| (5) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | speakers of divisive speech |
| (6) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | speakers of harsh speech |
| (7) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | speakers of useless talk |
| (8) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | the covetous |
| (9) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | the malevolent |
| (10) with neither cause nor condition, | there will be | those with false views |

Furthermore, bhikkhus, one who falls back on **uncaused and unconditioned** as the decisive factor will lack the desire and effort, thus: „This should be done. This should not be done.“

Not everything happened on *kammik* cause

Some feelings, Sīvaka, arise here:

- originating from **phlegm disorders**
- originating from **wind disorders**
- originating from **an imbalance of the three** (air, bile, phlegm)
- produced by **the change of climate**
- produced by **careless behavior**
- caused by **assault**
- produced as the **result of *kamma***.

The five laws of nature (*pañcaniyāma*)

- Many people believed – and still do believe – that everything about their present life was caused by actions in the past. But the Buddha taught there are five types of factors that cause things to happen, called the five *niyamas* (*niyāma* „controlling down“ [ni + √yam + *a]) or "orders or laws of nature". Kamma is only one of these factors. Present circumstances are the result of countless factors that are always in flux. There is no single cause that makes everything to be the way it is.

The five laws of nature (*pañcaniyāma*)

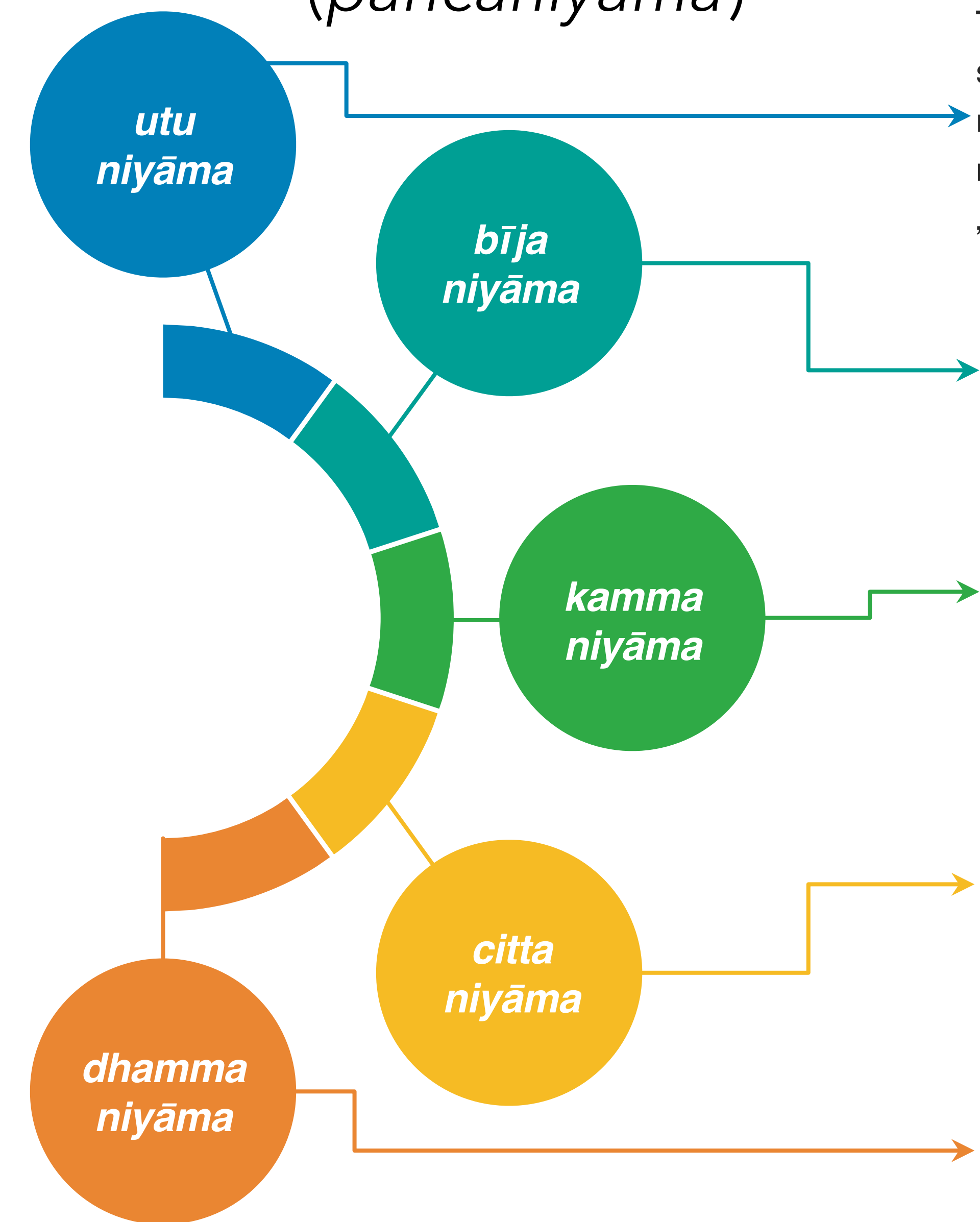
The law of seasons (*utu niyāma*) is the natural law of non-living matter (= physics, chemistry, geology, and several sciences of inorganic phenomena). This natural law orders the change of seasons and phenomena related to climate and the weather. It explains the nature of heat and fire, soil and gasses, water and wind. Most natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes would be governed by Utu Niyama. („Bīja-sutta“ SN 22.54 ja „Accāyika-sutta“ AN 3.92)

The law of seed (*bīja niyāma*) or organic, or the natural law of living matter (= biology), governs the nature of germs and seeds and the attributes of sprouts, leaves, flowers, fruits, and plant life generally.

The law of action (*kamma niyāma*) includes skillful and unskillful actions (*kamma*) that cause consequences corresponding to the action (*kamma-vipāka*). („Aṅguttaranikāya kammavagga“ AN 4, 11 sutta’s)

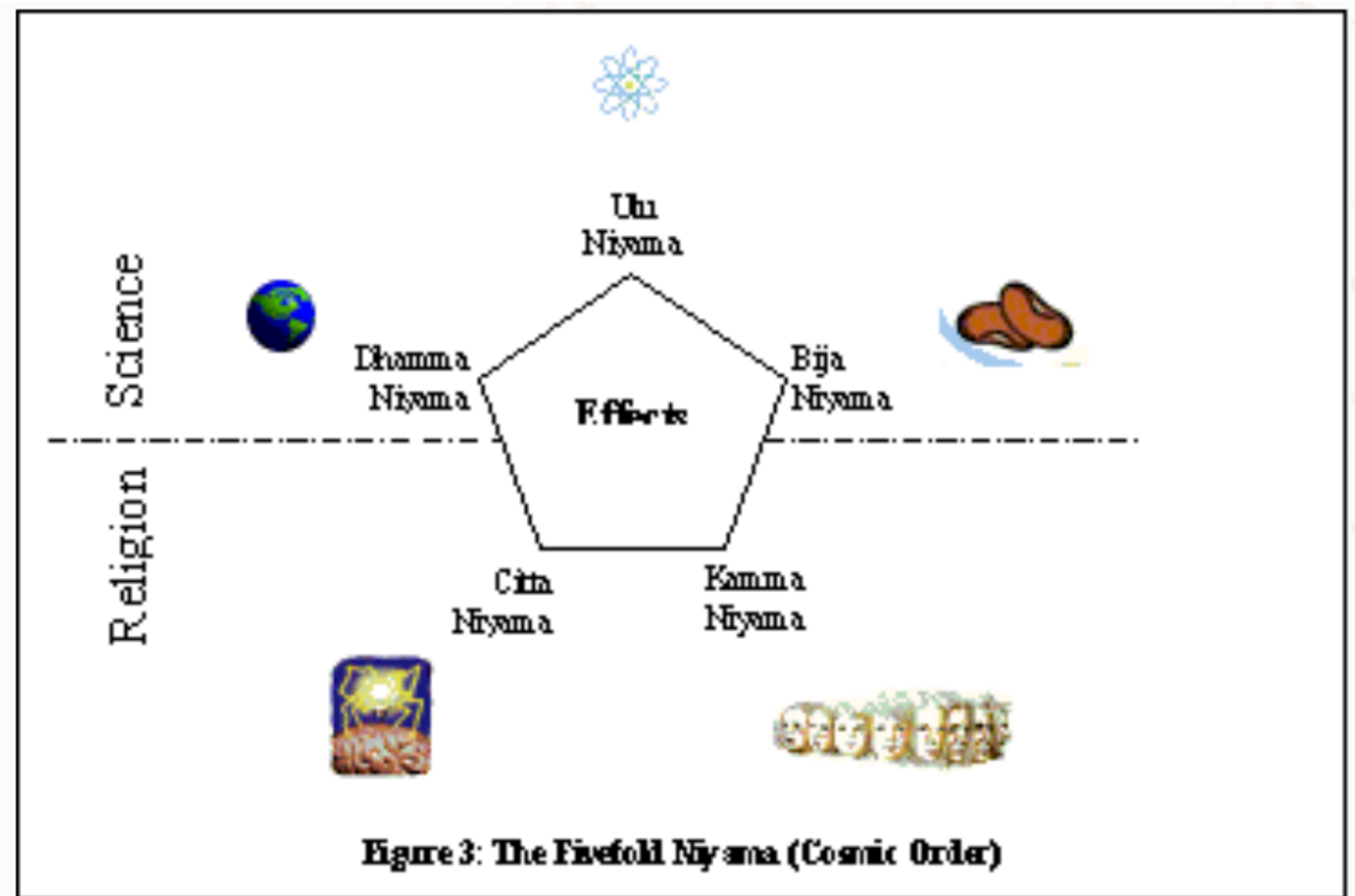
The laws of consciousness (*citta niyāma*) include mental processes related to consciousness and perception, arising and ceasing of perceptions and thoughts, functions of consciousness, etc. („Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha“ or „The Compendium of Things contained in the Abhidhamma“)

All are subject to the law of Dhamma (*dhamma niyāma*) [*dhamma* „manifestation of reality“ or the nature of existence] natural phenomena such as gravity and the like. („Paccaya-suttas“ SN 12.20, „Uppādā suttas“ AN 3.136 etc.)



The five laws of nature (*pañcaniyāma*)

- Therefore, when water grinds a rock smooth in the sea, it is not the kamma of the rock or the water, but an inorganic law (*utu niyāma*).
- But whether a person has a long or short life, whether he is sickly or in good health, whether he is good-looking, influential, rich, born in a high-ranking family, wise or not - that everything depends on one's own previous kamma, which is subject to the law of action (*kamma niyāma*).



**“Student, beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions;
they originate from their actions, are bound to their actions,
have their actions as their refuge.
It is action that distinguishes beings as inferior and superior.”**

*„kammassakā, māṇava, sattā kammadāyādā kammayonī kammabandhū
kammappaṭisaraṇā. kammaṃ satte vibhajati yadidaṃ hīnappaṇītatāyā.“*

*„Cūḷakammavibhaṅga-sutta“ MN 135.
„Kammaṇānākaraṇapañha“ Mil 3.4.4*

Kamma are threefold: (1) past action, (2) present action and (3) cessation of action



PAST ACTION

Determine *nāma-rūpa*
of present

PRESENT ACTION

No control over what
happens but has
subjective control over
response
+
Creates condition for
future

CESSATION OF ACTION

Resultant of present
(volitional) action

Past action, present action and cessation of action

- The eye (*cakkhu*), ear (*sota*), nose (*ghāna*), tongue (*jihvā*), body (*kāya*) and mind (*mano*) should be regarded as higher formations (*abhi-samkhata*) and higher consciousness (*abhi-sañcetaṅga*) **that have grown out of past action**, that which is perceptible (*vedaniya*).
- **A present action** is an action done now and now, in the present, through body, speech or mind (*etarahi kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā*).
- **Cessation of action** means liberation through the cessation of bodily action, speech action and mental action (*kāya-kamma-vacī-kamma-mano-kammaṃ nirodhā vimuttiṃ*), which is achieved through the path leading to the cessation of action (*kamma-nirodha-gāminī paṭipadā*) or the eightfold path of the ariya (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*) through execution.

The fruit of the deed may appear either in this, the next, or subsequent new births

- The fruit (*kamma-vipāka*) may appear either in this life (*diṭṭheva*), in the next new birth (*upapajjati*) or in some other subsequent cycle/existence (*apare vā pariyāye*).
- Cessation of action (*kamma-nirodha*) occurs through the cessation of the origin (*nidāna-sam-bhava*) or contact (*phasso*) of the cause of action.

Observing the misfortune and happiness of others and thinking about rebirth strengthens the realization of *nibbāna*

- The fact that the happiness and unhappiness of beings is the fruit of their own actions does not mean that when we see suffering, we should treat it benevolently or indifferently.
- In the „Sukhita-sutta“ (SN 15.12) ja „Duggata-sutta“ (SN 15.11) the Buddha teaches us to remind ourselves when we see suffering that the cycle of *saṃsāra* has an undiscoverable beginning (*anamataggoyam, bhikkhave, saṃsāro*), where the first obstacle of ignorance (*avijjā-nīvaraṇā*) and the first fetter of desire (*taṇhā-saṃyojanā*) cannot be found. Therefore, when a bhikkhu sees mental or physical suffering (*duggatam durūpeta*) or mental or physical happiness (*sukhitam susajjitam*), he should remind himself that we have all experienced the same joys and the same sufferings for countless times while circling this wheel of birth and death. Such thinking contributes to the destruction of all formations (*sabbasaṃkhā nibbinditum*) and the attainment of dispassion and liberation.

It is not possible for a non-enlightened person to fully understand the law of the fruit of action

- The law of kamma and fruit is a complex, continuous, dynamic phenomenon extending from one existence to another, which continues until the cessation of kamma.
- Although the law of action and fruition may be easy to grasp with the mind, it is difficult to see because the unexcited mind cannot directly witness the kamma processes in the absence of the dhamma eye. The consequence of one act may appear as a complex interrelationship of other acts, and that too in subsequent existences. An unexcited mind cannot see the exact causes of the fruit. Since what is manifesting today is an inevitable consequence of actions committed in this life or in a previous life, it is not possible to attribute one and only reason to a specific situation.
- An action and an action fruit are like an apple tree and an apple seed - an apple grows from a tree, which in turn has sprouted from a seed. The leaves and flowers of the apple tree are like an inevitable consequence. Only the result of the action (*kamma-vipāka*) which has sprung from the seed is visible, but what the seed (*kamma*) was, one can only guess.
- In the „Acinteyya-sutta“ (AN 4.77), the Buddha teaches that things are **4 unthinkable**:
 - (1) the scope (locality; region; sphere; object) of the Buddhas (*buddha-visaya*),
 - (2) the scope of one in jhāna (*jhāna-visaya*),
 - (3) the results of deeds (*kamma-vipāka*) and
 - (4) speculation about the world (*loka-cintā*).They should not be thought about, and anyone who tries to think about them deeply will go mad or get frustrated.

Only skillful wishes can come true

The Buddha taught that with the wrong view, desires will not come true. If a desire is based on a wrong view and the resulting wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong deed, wrong way of life, wrong aspiration, wrong awareness or wrong concentration (= *kamma*), then it is not possible for it to carry the desired fruit (= *vipāka*) or fulfillment. However, if desires are based on the right view, right thought, etc., and a person lives morally, behaves *brahmachariya* and strives for the desires based on them, if he/she has faith, ethics, learning, generosity, and wisdom, so sooner or later his/her desire will be fulfilled.

New Pāli words -

- *kamma-vipāka* - fruit of actions
- *lobha* - greed
- *dosa* - anger
- *moha* - delusion
- *ditta damma vēdaniya* - resulting in this life itself
- *phassa* - contact
- *niraya-gamanīyā* - lead to hell
- *tiracchāna-yoni-gamanī* - lead to animal plane
- *petti-visayagamanī* - lead to peetas plane

Questions

- Using an example, explain the difference between feelings arising from
 - (1) disturbances in the functioning of the organism,
 - (2) climate change,
 - (3) careless behavior,
 - (4) assault,
 - (5) the appearance of kamma or action.