

“Monks, these four persons are found existing in the world.
What four?

He who is in darkness and bound for darkness;
he who is in darkness, but bound for light;
he who is in light, but bound for darkness;
he who is in light and bound for light.”

1. A person in darkness bound for darkness

In this case, a certain person is born in a low family, in the family of some wretched man in which there is little food and drink and it is hard to earn a living. Moreover, he is ill-favored, ugly, sickly, crooked, lame, or paralyzed, with no food, clothes, or dwelling. He engages in the practice of evil with body, speech, and thought. So doing, when the body breaks up, after death, he is reborn in an unhappy destination.

2. A person in darkness, but bound for light

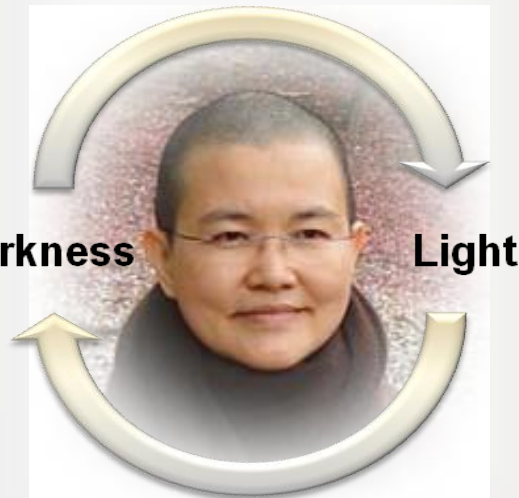
In this case, a certain person is born in a low family...without dwelling. He engages in the practice of good with body, speech, and thought. So doing, when body breaks up, after death, he is reborn in a happy destination, in a heavenly world.

3. A person in light, but bound for darkness

In this case, a certain person is born in a high family, a family of wealthy nobles or Brahmins, or of wealthy householders, in a family that is rich, exceedingly rich, and of great possessions. And that man is handsome, comely, and charming, possessed of supreme beauty of form. But he engages in the practice of evil with body, speech, and thought. So doing, when the body breaks up, after death, he is reborn in an unhappy destination.

4. A person who is in light and bound for light

In this case, a person is born in a high family...and of great possessions. He engages in the practice of good with body, speech, and thought. So doing, when the body breaks up, after death, he is reborn in a happy destination, in a heavenly world.



Sayalay Susilā

What is the cause and condition that beings are born in low or rich families?
For beings to be sickly or healthy, ugly or handsome?

Beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions, and have their actions as their refuge. It is action that distinguishes beings as inferior and superior.

Generosity bears wealth; cruelty reaps illness; loving-kindness leads to beauty.