

## **Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses**

### **The Discourse On Many Feelings (Bahuvedanīyasutta)**

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living in the monastery offered by Anathapindika in Jeta's grove in Savatthi. The carpenter Pancakanga approached venerable Udayi worshipped and sat on a side and asked 'Venerable sir, how many feelings are made known by the Blessed One?' 'Householder, three feelings, are made known by the Blessed One. They are pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings and neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings'. 'Venerable Udayi, there are only two feelings pointed out by the Blessed One. They are pleasant feelings and unpleasant feelings, neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings are an exalted state declared by the Blessed One'. For the second time venerable Udayi said to the carpenter Pancakanga. 'Householder, not two feelings, the Blessed One has said of three feelings, pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings and neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings'. For the second time, the carpenter Pancakanga said, 'Venerable Udayi, two feelings are made known by the Blessed One and they are pleasant feelings and unpleasant feelings. This neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings, is an exalted state is said, by the Blessed One'. For the third time venerable Udayi said to the carpenter Pancakanga. 'Householder, the Blessed One has said of three feelings, pleasant feelings, unpleasant feelings and neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings'. For the third time, the carpenter Pancakanga said. 'Venerable Udayi, only two feelings are pointed out by the Blessed One and they are pleasant feelings and unpleasant feelings. The neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings, is an exalted state is said, by the Blessed One'. Venerable Udayi could not convince the carpenter Pancakanga and the carpenter Pancakanga could not convince venerable Udayi.

Venerable Ananda heard this conversation between venerable Udayi and the carpenter Pancakanga and approached the Blessed One worshipped the Blessed One and sat on a side and related the complete conversation to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One addressed venerable Ananda. 'Two feelings are also declared by me, three in another, five in another, six in another, eighteen in another, thirty-six in another and also in another one hundred and eight feelings. Thus Ananda, this Teaching

is analytically preached. Ananda, in this analytical Teaching, if one does not approve another's view appreciating and accepting it, this kind of thing could happen and quarrels, fights, disputes and verbal fights would ensue. Therefore you should be united, open hearted, should co-operate like milk and water, and should look at each other with understanding and abide'.

Ananda, there are five strands of sense desires. What five: Pleasant agreeable forms cognizable by eye consciousness arousing fondness and sensual desires. Pleasant agreeable sounds—Pleasant agreeable smells-- Pleasant agreeable tastes -- Pleasant agreeable touches cognizable by body consciousness arousing fondness and sensual desires. Ananda, these are the five strands of sensual desires. All pleasure and pleasantness that arise on account of the five strands of sensual desires, are said sensual pleasures.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure, beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason? Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this? Here the bhikkhu secluded from sensual desires, secluded from things of demerit, with thoughts and thought processes and with joy and pleasantness born from seclusion abides in the first jhaana. Ananda, this exceeds, and is more exalted than the previous..

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure, beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason: Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this? Here, the bhikkhu overcoming thoughts and thought processes, and the mind, in one point internally appeased without thoughts and thought processes and with joy and pleasantness born of concentration abides in the second jhaana Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason? Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this?

Here the bhikkhu with equanimity to joy and detachment abides mindful and aware, of pleasantness with the body too and abides in the third jhana. To this the noble ones say, abiding mindfully in equanimity. Ananda, this exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason: Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this?

Here the bhikkhu dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness, and earlier overcoming pleasure and displeasure, without unpleasantness and pleasantness and mindfulness purified with equanimity abides in the fourth jhana Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason: Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this?

Here, Ananda, the bhikkhu overcoming all perceptions of matter, not attending to various perceptions with space is boundless abides in the sphere of space. Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason? Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this?

Here, Ananda, the bhikkhu, overcoming all space and with consciousness is boundless abides in the sphere of consciousness Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason? Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this?

Here, Ananda, the bhikkhu overcoming all the sphere of consciousness, with there is nothing abides in the sphere of nothingness. Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason: Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted than this? Here, Ananda, the bhikkhu overcoming all the sphere of nothingness abides in the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception. Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, if someone says, this is the highest pleasure that beings experience, I would not second it. What is the reason? Ananda, there is a pleasantness which exceeds this, and is more exalted than this. Ananda, what is that pleasantness which exceeds this and is more exalted?

Here, Ananda, the bhikkhu, overcoming all the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception attains to the sphere where perceptions and feelings fade Ananda, this pleasantness exceeds and is more exalted than the previous.

Ananda, there is a possibility, for ascetics of other sects to question, does the recluse Gotama declare the cessation of perceptions and feelings also as a feeling? How could that happen? How could that be? This is our reply to those ascetics of other sects. Friends, for the matter of only feeling pleasant, the Blessed One does not declare it as pleasant. Whenever pleasantness is gained to that the Blessed One declares pleasant (\* ).

The Blessed One said thus and venerable Aananda, delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

Notes:

(\*) Friends for the matter of only feeling pleasant, the Blessed One does not declare it as pleasant. Whenever pleasantness is gained, to that the Blessed One declares pleasant. 'na kho aavuso bhagavaa sukha.myeva vedana.m sandhaaya sukhasmi.m pa~n~naapeti.apica aavuso yattha yattha sukha.m upalabhati yahi.m yahi.m ta.m ta.m tathaagato sukhasmi.m pa~n~naapeti.' Yet when pleasantness is gained, to that the Blessed One declares pleasant. The discourse shows how the least pleasantness in the sensual sphere and the most exalted pleasantness in the immaterial sphere is gained,. yet the Blessed One is not pleased clinging to even that highest pleasantness. Extinction and enlightenment means giving up that too.

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