

Bahuvedanīya Sutta

MN 59 The Many Felt Experiences

Translated by Ānanda

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Thus I have heard,

*Once, the Awakened One was Living in Sāvatti
In Jeta's Grove, at Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery.¹*

*At that time,
The Carpenter Pañcakaṅga went to visit the Elder Udāyī;
He approached, paid loving respects and sat down beside him.*

Then the carpenter Pañcakaṅga asked the Elder Udāyī:

“Bhante, how many feelings were explained by the Awakened One?”

[Udāyī]

“The Awakened One explained three kinds of feelings carpenter:

*Plaisant feelings,
Unplaisant feelings and
Neutral feelings.*

These are the three kinds of feelings explained by the Awakened One.”

When this was said, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga said this to the Elder Udāyī:

[Pañcakaṅga]

*“But Bhante Udāyī,
The Awakened One did not speak about three kinds of feelings,
He spoke about two kinds of feelings:*

*Pleasant and
Unpleasant.*

*Bhante, the Awakened One said that
these neutral feelings are delightful happiness partaking of peace.”*

For a second time: ... [Abridged]

¹ This sutta is identical to SN IV 36.19 Pañcakaṅga Sutta, to the exception of the first sentence and the last couple sentences. Which denotes its relevance.

For a third time the Elder Udāyī said [the same] to the carpenter Pañcakaṅga: ... [Abridged]

*But Bhante Udāyī,
the Awakened One did not speak about three kinds of feelings... [Abridged]*

*Never could the Elder Udāyī's explanation
be received by the carpenter Pañcakaṅga,
Nor could the carpenter Pañcakaṅga's explanation
be received by the Elder Udāyī.*



*The Elder Ānanda, overheard this friendly discussion
between the Elder Udāyī and the carpenter Pañcakaṅga.*

*Then the Elder Ānanda went to the Awakened One,
Sat down beside him and reported the friendly discussion
and informed the Awakened One of all that happened.*

[The Buddha]

*“The statement of the Elder Udāyī,
who the carpenter Pañcakaṅga would not accept was true,
And the statement of the carpenter Pañcakaṅga,
who the Elder Udāyī would not accept was also true.”*

*Ānanda,
I spoke of two kinds of feelings in one exposition.
I spoke of three kinds of feelings in another exposition.
I spoke of five kinds of feelings in another exposition.
I spoke of six kinds of feelings in another exposition.
I spoke of eighteen kinds of feelings in another exposition.
I spoke of thirty-six kinds of feelings in another exposition.
And I spoke of a hundred and eight kinds of feelings in another exposition.*

I have taught the Dhamma in all of these different ways Ānanda.²

*When the Dhamma has been taught by me in all of these different ways,
Even if it was well-spoken and clearly expressed each time;*

*It is to be expected that:
Some will not approve,
Some will not concede,
Some will not appreciate;*

² *Evaṃ pariyāyadesito kho, ānanda, mayā dhammo.*

*These people will be living at strife, disputing and arguing,
Continually attacking each other with piercing of words.*

I have taught the Dhamma in all of these different ways Ānanda.

*When the Dhamma has been taught by me in all of these different ways,
Well-spoken and clearly expressed each time;*

*It is to be expected that,
Some will approve,
Some will concede,
Some will appreciate.*

*These people will be living in unity,
In mutual joy, without disputes,
Blending together like milk and water,
Continually looking upon one another with caring eyes.³*



[Outward Attraction]

Ānanda, there are these five qualities of outward attraction.

What five?

*Forms perceived by the eye which are
Desired and loved,
Seductive and enticing,
Mingled with desire and exciting.⁴*

*Sounds perceived by the ear which are
Desired and loved,
Seductive and enticing,
Mingled with desire and exciting.*

*Odors perceived by the nose which are
Desired and loved,
Seductive and enticing,
mingled with desire and exciting.*

³ *Samaggā sammodamānā avivadamānā khīrodakībhūtā aññamaññaṃ piyacakkhūhi sampassantā viharissantīti.*

⁴ *Iṭṭhā kantā manāpā piyarūpā kāmūpasamhītā rajanīyā.*

*Flavors perceived by the tongue which are
Desired and loved,
Seductive and enticing,
Mingled with desire and exciting.*

*Tangibles perceived by the body which are
Desired and loved,
Seductive and enticing,
Mingled with desire and exciting.*

These are the five qualities of outward attraction Ānanda.

*Ānanda,
The happiness and delight that arises
rooted upon these five qualities of outward attraction;*

This is called the happiness of craving.

*Ānanda, those who say:
“This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced.”⁵*

I do not agree with them.⁶

Why is that?

*Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.⁷*

And what is this other kind of happiness?

[1. First Jhāna]

*Here Ānanda,
Disengaged from the outward desire,
And detached from unwholesome mental states,
Still attended by thinking and reflection,
With the blissful happiness born of mental detachment,
A bhikkhu understands and abides in the first level of meditation.*

*This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond and more exalted.*

Ānanda, those who say:

⁵ *‘Etapparamaṃ santaṃ sukhaṃ somanassaṃ paṭisaṃvedentī’ ti*

⁶ *Idaṃ nesāhaṃ nānujānāmi.*

⁷ *Etamhā sukhā aññaṃ sukhaṃ abhikkantataraṅca paṇītataṅca*

“This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced.”

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

*Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.*

What is this other kind of happiness?

[2. Second Jhāna]

*Here Ānanda,
With the calming of thinking and reflection,
With inner tranquilization,
His mind becoming unified,
Without thinking and reflection,
With the blissful happiness born of mental stillness,
A bhikkhu understands and abides in the second level of meditation.*

*This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.*

*Ānanda, those who say:
“This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced.”*

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

*Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.*

What is this other kind of happiness?

[3. Third Jhāna]

*Here Ānanda,
With the calming of bliss,
Abiding in mental steadiness,
Present and fully aware,
Experiencing happiness within his body
That state, which the righteous ones describe as such:
“Steady presence of mind: This is a pleasant abiding.”
A bhikkhu understands and abides in the third level of meditation.*

*This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.*

*Ānanda, those who say:
“This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced.”*

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

*Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.*

What is this other kind of happiness?

[4. Fourth Jhāna]

*Here Ānanda,
Letting go the notions of happiness and unhappiness.
With the earlier settling of mental gladness and affliction,
With neither pain nor pleasure,
Purified by unmoving presence,
A bhikkhu understands and abides in the fourth level of meditation.*

*This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.*

*Ānanda, those who say:
“This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced.”*

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

*Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.*

What is this other kind of happiness?

[5. The Plane of Endless Space]

Here Ānanda,
Having entirely gone beyond all perception of form,⁸
With the awareness of sensory impact fading away,⁹
Turning away from the awareness plurality,¹⁰
Knowing: 'There is Endless Space'¹¹
A bhikkhu understands and abides in the plane of endless space.

This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.

Ānanda, those who say:
"This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced."

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.

What is this other kind of happiness?

[6. Plane of Endless Consciousness]

Here Ānanda,
Having gone entirely beyond the plane of endless space,
Knowing: 'There is Endless Consciousness'¹²
He understands and abides in the plane of Endless Consciousness.

This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.

Ānanda, those who say:
"This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced."

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

⁸ Bhikkhu sabbaso rūpasaññānaṃ samatikkamā

⁹ Paṭighasaññānaṃ atthaṅgamā: Contact at the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body fade away.

¹⁰ Nānattasaññānaṃ amanasikārā... Simply put, very still, oneness of mind.

¹¹ 'Ananto ākāso'ti

¹² 'Anantaṃ viññāṇan'ti

Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.

What is this other kind of happiness?

[7. Plane of Nothingness]

Here Ānanda,
Having entirely gone beyond the plane of endless consciousness,
Knowing: 'There is nothing'¹³
He understands and abides in the plane of nothingness.

This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.

Ānanda, those who say:
"This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced."

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.

What is this other kind of happiness?

[8. The limit of Awareness]

Here Ānanda,
Having entirely gone beyond the plane of nothingness,
He understands and abides in the plane between awareness and its limit.¹⁴

¹³ 'Natthi kiñcī'ti

¹⁴ *Nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ*: Lit. Neither-Awareness-Nor-Unawareness

One here might pause in wonder. Since the Buddha's Teaching is usually understood as "mindfulness", here and in the next plane, there is question of the release from Awareness. An essential notion which has curiously remained widely unrevealed to the bulk of practitioners today. And that this release from awareness and feeling is the culmination of the Buddha's Teaching: Nibbāna. This might appear baffling to some, that "mindfulness" is not the actual goal of the practice, nor is it even "a practice". Mindfulness is a result from the practice, which is to abandon craving: Greed, hatred and Delusion. Craving is non-mindfulness; Mindfulness is non-craving. Mindfulness or presence arises when the mind is not latching upon or bend upon any object. This also beautifully demonstrate that in fact, even "mindfulness" needs to be let go of. This shows the depth of the practice of letting go and relaxing. This cannot be experienced by absorption concentration since the mind is then trained to latch on very strongly to one

*This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.*

*Ānanda, those who say:
“This is the highest peace, happiness and delight that can be experienced.”*

I do not agree with them.

Why is that?

*Because Ānanda,
There is another kind of happiness,
Beyond this, more exalted than this.*

What is this other kind of happiness?

[9. The Release from Experiential Awareness]

*Here Ānanda,
Going entirely beyond the plane between awareness and its limit,
A bhikkhu understands and abides in the Release from experiential awareness.¹⁵*

*This is that other kind of happiness,
Which is beyond this and more exalted.*



*Because of this Ānanda,
Those wanderers established in other teachings might ask:¹⁶*

*“The sage Gotama speaks of
The Release from experiential awareness,
And declares it as partaking of Happiness.”¹⁷*

object or the other. This kind of absorption “mindfulness” is not about letting go, it is about forcing and controlling the mind.

¹⁵ *Saññāvedayitanirodham. Vedayita [pp. of vedeti] felt, experienced.*

¹⁶ *Yaṃ aññatitthiyā paribbājakā evaṃ vadeyyuṃ:*

¹⁷ *The wise meditators who experience this stage of meditation, know by direct knowledge the veracity of this statement. No happiness can equal the Release of the mind from perception and feeling, Nibbāna.*

*‘Etaṃ santaṃ etaṃ paṇītaṃ, yadidaṃ sabbasaṅkhārasamatho
Sabbūpādhipaṇinissaggo, taṇhākkhayo virāgo nirodho nibbāna’ ti.
This is peaceful, this is sublime, that is, the appeasement of all mental activity
The giving up of all mental limitations, the destruction of craving, unclenching, release, Nibbāna.*

-AN III 32 Ānanda Sutta

*“How can this be?”
“How can this be said?”*

*When this is asked Ānanda,
The wanderers established in other teachings should be answered in this way:*

*Friend,
The Awakened One does not declare
Only pleasant feelings
As partaking of happiness.¹⁸*

*Friend,
I this way, wherever one goes,
Happiness is found, whether here or there,
This the Truth-Finder declares as [True] happiness.¹⁹*

This is what the Awakened One said.

Glad at heart, the Venerable Ānanda rejoiced in his words.

¹⁸ *‘na kho, āvuso, bhagavā sukhaññeva vedanaṃ sandhāya sukhasmiṃ paññapeti.*

¹⁹ *Yattha yattha, āvuso, sukhaṃ upalabbhati, yaṃ yaṃ, taṃ taṃ tathāgato sukhasmiṃ paññapeti”’ti.*
The noblest source of happiness. The happiness of Nibbāna. Bliss, so subtle and exquisite, to be experienced by the wise, for oneself, by oneself, through direct meditative experience, through the practice of the Ariya Dhamma of the Awakened One.



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