

19 (9) Pañcakaṅga

Then the carpenter Pañcakaṅga approached the Venerable Udāyī, paid homage to him, sat down to one side, and asked him: “Venerable Udāyī, how many kinds of feelings have been spoken of by the Blessed One?”²⁴⁵

“Three kinds of feelings, carpenter, have been spoken of by the Blessed One: pleasant feeling, painful feeling, neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling. These are the three kinds of feelings that have been spoken of by the Blessed One.”

When this was said, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga said to the Venerable Udāyī: “The Blessed One did not speak of three kinds of feelings, Venerable Udāyī. He spoke of two kinds of feelings: pleasant feeling and painful feeling. As to this neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, venerable sir, the Blessed One has said that this is included in the peaceful and sublime pleasure.”

A second time [224] and a third time the Venerable Udāyī stated his position, and a second time and a third time the carpenter Pañcakaṅga stated his, but the Venerable Udāyī could not convince the carpenter Pañcakaṅga nor could the carpenter Pañcakaṅga convince the Venerable Udāyī.

The Venerable Ānanda heard this conversation between the Venerable Udāyī and the carpenter Pañcakaṅga. Then he approached the Blessed One, paid homage to him, sat down to one side, and reported to the Blessed One the entire conversation. [The Blessed One said:]

“Ānanda, it was a true method of exposition that the carpenter Pañcakaṅga would not approve of from the bhikkhu Udāyī, and it was a true method of exposition that the bhikkhu Udāyī would not approve of from the carpenter Pañcakaṅga. I have spoken of two kinds of feelings by [one] method of exposition; I have spoken of three kinds of feelings by [another] method of exposition; I have spoken of five kinds of feelings ... six kinds of feelings ... eighteen kinds of feelings ... thirty-six kinds of feelings by [another] method of exposition; [225] and I have spoken of one hundred and eight kinds of feelings by [still another] method of exposition. Thus, Ānanda, the Dhamma has been taught by me through [different] methods of exposition.²⁴⁶

“When the Dhamma has been taught by me in such a way through [different] methods of exposition, it may be expected of those who will not concede, allow, and approve of what is well stated and well spoken by others that they will become contentious and quarrelsome and engage in disputes, and that they will dwell stabbing each other with verbal daggers. But when the Dhamma has been taught by me in such a way through [different] methods of exposition, it may be expected of those who will concede, allow, and approve of what is well stated and well spoken by others that they will live in concord, with mutual appreciation, without disputing, blending like milk and water, viewing each other with kindly eyes.

“Ānanda, there are these five cords of sensual pleasure. What five? Forms cognizable by the eye that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tantalizing. Sounds cognizable by the ear ... Odours cognizable by the nose ... Tastes cognizable by the tongue ... Tactile objects cognizable by the body that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, pleasing, sensually enticing, tantalizing. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure. The pleasure and joy that arise in dependence on these five cords of sensual pleasure: this is called sensual pleasure.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by thought and examination, with rapture and happiness born of seclusion. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness. [226]

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and

sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, with the subsiding of thought and examination, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the second jhāna, which has internal confidence and unification of mind, is without thought and examination, and has rapture and happiness born of concentration. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, with the fading away as well of rapture, a bhikkhu dwells equanimous and, mindful and clearly comprehending, he experiences happiness with the body; he enters and dwells in the third jhāna of which the noble ones declare: ‘He is equanimous, mindful, one who dwells happily.’ This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous passing away of joy and displeasure, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the fourth jhāna, which is neither painful nor pleasant and includes the purification of mindfulness by equanimity. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.²⁴⁷ “Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. [227] Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, with the complete transcendence of perceptions of forms, with the passing away of perceptions of sensory impingement, with nonattention to perceptions of diversity, aware that ‘space is infinite,’ a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the base of the infinity of space. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, by completely transcending the base of the infinity of space, aware that ‘consciousness is infinite,’ a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the base of the infinity of consciousness. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, by completely transcending the base of the infinity of consciousness, aware that ‘there is nothing,’ a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the base of nothingness. This [228] is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, by completely transcending the base of nothingness, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the base of neither-perception-nor-nonperception. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than the previous kind of happiness.

“Though some may say, ‘This is the supreme pleasure and joy that beings experience,’ I would not concede this to them. Why is that? Because there is another kind of happiness more excellent and sublime than that happiness. And what is that other kind of happiness? Here, Ānanda, by completely transcending the base of neither-perception-nor-nonperception, a bhikkhu enters and dwells in the cessation of perception and feeling. This is that other kind of happiness more excellent and sublime

than the previous kind of happiness.²⁴⁸

“Now it is possible, Ānanda, that wanderers of other sects might speak thus: ‘The ascetic Gotama speaks of the cessation of perception and feeling, and he maintains that it is included in happiness. What is that? How is that?’ When wanderers of other sects speak thus, Ānanda, they should be told: ‘The Blessed One, friends, does not describe a state as included in happiness only with reference to pleasant feeling. But rather, friends, wherever happiness is found and in whatever way, the Tathāgata describes that as included in happiness.’”²⁴⁹