44 Cūḷavedalla Sutta
The Shorter Series of Questions and Answers

[299] 1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels\' Sanctuary. Then the lay follower Visākha went to the bhikkhuni Dhammadinnā, and after paying homage to her, he sat down at one side and asked her:

(Personality)

2. "Lady, 'personality, personality' is said. What is called personality by the Blessed One?"

"Friend Visākha, these five aggregates affected by clinging are called personality by the Blessed One; that is, the material form aggregate affected by clinging, the feeling aggregate affected by clinging, the perception aggregate affected by clinging, the formations aggregate affected by clinging, and the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. These five aggregates affected by clinging are called personality by the Blessed One."

Saying, "Good lady," the lay follower Visākha delighted and rejoiced in the bhikkhuni Dhammadinnā's words. Then he asked her a further question:

3. "Lady, 'origin of personality, origin of personality' is said. What is called the origin of personality by the Blessed One?"

"Friend Visākha, it is craving, which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that; that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for being, and craving for non-being. This is called the origin of personality by the Blessed One."

4. "Lady, 'cessation of personality, cessation of personality' is said. What is called the cessation of personality by the Blessed One?"

"Friend Visākha, it is the remainderless fading away and ceasing, the giving up, relinquishing, letting go, and rejecting of that same craving. This is called the cessation of personality by the Blessed One."

5. "Lady, 'the way leading to the cessation of personality, the way leading to the cessation of personality' is said. What is called the way leading to the cessation of personality by the Blessed One?"

"Friend Visākha, it is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration."

6. "Lady, is that clinging the same as these five aggregates affected by clinging, or is the clinging something apart from the five aggregates affected by clinging?"

"Friend Visākha, that clinging is neither the same as these five aggregates affected by clinging nor is clinging something apart from the five aggregates affected by clinging. It is the desire and lust in regard to the five aggregates affected by clinging that is the clinging there."

(Personality View)

7. "Lady, how does personality view come to be?"

"Here, friend Visākha, an untaught ordinary person, who has no regard for noble ones and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dhamma, who has no regard for true men and is unskilled and undisciplined in their Dhamma, regards material form as self, or self as possessed of material form, or material form as in self, or self as in material form. He regards feeling as self, or self as possessed of feeling, or feeling as in self, or self as in feeling. He regards perception as self, or self as possessed of perception, or perception as in self, or self as in perception. He regards formations as self, or self as possessed of formations, or formations as in self, or self as in formations. He regards consciousness as self, or self as possessed of consciousness, or consciousness as in
self, or self as in consciousness. That is how personality view comes to be."

8. "Lady, how does personality view not come to be?"

"Here, friend Visākha, a well-taught noble disciple, who has regard for noble ones and is skilled and disciplined in their Dhamma, who has regard for true men and is skilled and disciplined in their Dhamma, does not regard material form as self, or self as possessed of material form, or material form as in self, or self as in material form. He does not regard feeling as self, or self as possessed of feeling, or feeling as in self, or self as in feeling. He does not regard perception as self, or self as possessed of perception, or perception as in self, or self as in perception. He does not regard formations as self, or self as possessed of formations, or formations as in self, or self as in formations. He does not regard consciousness as self, or self as possessed of consciousness, or consciousness as in self, or self as in consciousness. That is how personality view does not come to be."

9. "Lady, what is the Noble Eightfold Path?"

"Friend Visākha, it is just this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration."

10. "Lady, is the Noble Eightfold Path conditioned or unconditioned?"

"Friend Visākha, the Noble Eightfold Path is [301] conditioned."

11. "Lady, are the three aggregates included by the Noble Eightfold Path, or is the Noble Eightfold Path included by the three aggregates?"

"The three aggregates are not included by the Noble Eightfold Path, friend Visākha, but the Noble Eightfold Path is included by the three aggregates. Right speech, right action, and right livelihood - these states are included in the aggregate of virtue. Right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration - these states are included in the aggregate of concentration. Right view and right intention - these states are included in the aggregate of wisdom."

12. "Lady, what is concentration? What is the basis of concentration? What is the equipment of concentration? What is the development of concentration?"

"Unification of mind, friend Visākha, is concentration; the four foundations of mindfulness are the basis of concentration; the four right kinds of striving are the equipment of concentration; the repetition, development, and cultivation of these same states is the development of concentration therein."

13. "Lady, how many formations are there?"

"There are these three formations, friend Visākha: the bodily formation, the verbal formation, and the mental formation."

14. "But, lady, what is the bodily formation? What is the verbal formation? What is the mental formation?"

"In-breathing and out-breathing, friend Visākha, are the bodily formation; applied thought and sustained thought are the verbal formation; perception and feeling are the mental formation."

15. "But, lady, why are in-breathing and out-breathing the bodily formation? Why are applied thought and sustained thought the verbal formation? Why are perception and feeling the mental formation?"

"Friend Visākha, in-breathing and out-breathing are bodily, these are states bound up with the body; that is why in-breathing and out-breathing are the bodily formation. First one applies thought and sustains thought, and subsequently one breaks out into speech; that is why applied thought and sustained thought are the verbal formation. Perception and feeling are mental, these are states bound up with the mind; that is why perception and feeling are the mental formation."

16. "Lady, how does the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling come to be?"

"Friend Visākha, when a bhikkhu is attaining the cessation of
perception and feeling, it does not occur to him: ‘I shall attain the cessation of perception and feeling,’ or ‘I am attaining the cessation of perception and feeling,’ or ‘I have attained the cessation of perception and feeling’; but rather his mind has previously been developed in such a way that it leads him to that state.”[467] [302]

17. “Lady, when a bhikkhu is attaining the cessation of perception and feeling, which states cease first in him: the bodily formation, the verbal formation, or the mental formation?”

“Friend Visākha, when a bhikkhu is attaining the cessation of perception and feeling, first the verbal formation ceases, then the bodily formation, then the mental formation.”[468]

18. “Lady, how does emergence from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling come to be?”

“Friend Visākha, when a bhikkhu is emerging from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, it does not occur to him: ‘I shall emerge from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling,’ or ‘I am emerging from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling,’ or ‘I have emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling’; but rather his mind has previously been developed in such a way that it leads him to that state.”[469]

19. “Lady, when a bhikkhu is emerging from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, which states arise first in him: the bodily formation, the verbal formation, or the mental formation?”

“Friend Visākha, when a bhikkhu is emerging from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, first the mental formation arises, then the bodily formation, then the verbal formation.”[470]

20. “Lady, when a bhikkhu has emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, how many kinds of contact touch him?”

“Friend Visākha, when a bhikkhu has emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, three kinds of contact touch him: voidness contact, signless contact, desireless contact.”[471]

21. “Lady, when a bhikkhu has emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, to what does his mind incline, to what does it lean, to what does it tend?”

“Friend Visākha, when a bhikkhu has emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, his mind inclines to seclusion, leans to seclusion, tends to seclusion.”[472]

(Feeling)

22. “Lady, how many kinds of feeling are there?”

“Friend Visākha, there are three kinds of feeling: pleasant feeling, painful feeling, and neither-painful-nor-painful feeling.”

23. “But, lady, what is pleasant feeling? What is painful feeling? What is neither painful feeling?”

“Friend Visākha, whatever is felt bodily or mentally as pleasant and soothing is pleasant feeling. Whatever is felt bodily or mentally as painful and hurting is painful feeling. Whatever is felt bodily or mentally as neither soothing nor hurting [303] is neither-painful-nor-painful feeling.”

24. “Lady, what is pleasant and what is painful in regard to pleasant feeling? What is painful and what is pleasant in regard to painful feeling? What is pleasant and what is painful in regard to neither-painful-nor-painful feeling?”

“Friend Visākha, pleasant feeling is pleasant when it persists and painful when it changes. Painful feeling is painful when it persists and pleasant when it changes. Neither-painful-nor-painful feeling is pleasant when there is knowledge [of it] and painful when there is no knowledge [of it].”

(UNDERLYING TENDENCIES)


“Friend Visākha, the underlying tendency to lust underlies pleasant feeling. The underlying tendency to aversion underlies painful feeling. The underlying tendency to ignorance underlies neither-painful-nor-painful feeling.”[473]

26. “Lady, does the underlying tendency to lust underlie all pleasant feeling? Does the underlying tendency to aversion underlie all painful feeling? Does the underlying tendency to ignorance underlie all neither-painful-nor-painful feeling?”

“Friend Visākha, the underlying tendency to lust does not
underlie all pleasant feeling. The underlying tendency to aversion does not underlie all painful feeling. The underlying tendency to ignorance does not underlie all neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling."

27. "Lady, what should be abandoned in regard to pleasant feeling? What should be abandoned in regard to painful feeling? What should be abandoned in regard to neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling?"

"Friend Visākha, the underlying tendency to lust should be abandoned in regard to pleasant feeling. The underlying tendency to aversion should be abandoned in regard to painful feeling. The underlying tendency to ignorance should be abandoned in regard to neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling."

28. "Lady, does the underlying tendency to lust have to be abandoned in regard to all pleasant feeling? Does the underlying tendency to aversion have to be abandoned in regard to all painful feeling? Does the underlying tendency to ignorance have to be abandoned in regard to all neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling?"

"Friend Visākha, the underlying tendency to lust does not have to be abandoned in regard to all pleasant feeling. The underlying tendency to aversion does not have to be abandoned in regard to all painful feeling. The underlying tendency to ignorance does not have to be abandoned in regard to all neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.

"Here, friend Visākha, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. With that he abandons lust, and the underlying tendency to lust does not underlie that."

"Here a bhikkhu considers thus: 'When shall I enter upon and abide in that base that the noble ones now enter upon and abide in?' In one who thus generates a longing for the supreme liberations, [304] grief arises with that longing as condition. With that he abandons aversion, and the underlying tendency to aversion does not underlie that."

"Here, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasant and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. With

that he abandons ignorance, and the underlying tendency to ignorance does not underlie that."476

(COUNTERPARTS)

29. "Lady, what is the counterpart of pleasant feeling?"

"Friend Visākha, painful feeling is the counterpart of pleasant feeling."

"What is the counterpart of painful feeling?"

"Pleasant feeling is the counterpart of painful feeling."

"What is the counterpart of neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling?"

"Ignorance is the counterpart of neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling."

"What is the counterpart of ignorance?"

"True knowledge is the counterpart of ignorance."

"What is the counterpart of true knowledge?"

"Deliverance is the counterpart of true knowledge."

"What is the counterpart of deliverance?"

"Nibbāna is the counterpart of deliverance."

"Lady, what is the counterpart of Nibbāna?"

"Friend Visākha, you have pushed this line of questioning too far; you were not able to grasp the limit to questions.479 For the holy life, friend Visākha, merges in Nibbāna, culminates in Nibbāna, ends in Nibbāna. If you wish, friend Visākha, go to the Blessed One and ask him about the meaning of this. As the Blessed One explains it to you, so you should remember it."

(CONCLUSION)

30. Then the lay follower Visākha, having delighted and rejoiced in the bhikkhuni Dhammadinna's words, rose from his seat, and after paying homage to her, keeping her on his right, he went to the Blessed One. After paying homage to him, he sat down at one side and told the Blessed One his entire conversation with the bhikkhuni Dhammadinna. When he finished speaking, the Blessed One told him:

31. "The bhikkhuni Dhammadinna is wise, Visākha, the bhikkhuni Dhammadinna has great wisdom. If you had asked me the meaning of this, I would have explained it to you [305] in
the same way that the bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā has explained it. Such is its meaning, and so you should remember it.⁴⁸⁰

That is what the Blessed One said. The lay follower Visākha was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.