

PAPAÑCA

§ 1. Having been given leave by the Blessed One, Sakka the deva-king asked him his first question: “Fettered with what, dear sir—though they think, ‘May we live free from hostility, free from violence, free from rivalry, free from ill will, free from those who are hostile’—do devas, human beings, asuras, nāgas, gandhabbas, & whatever other many kinds of beings there are, nevertheless live in hostility, violence, rivalry, ill will, with those who are hostile?”

Thus Sakka asked his first question of the Blessed One, and the Blessed One, when asked, replied: “Devas, human beings, asuras, nāgas, gandhabbas, & whatever other many kinds of beings there are, are fettered with *envy & stinginess*, which is why—even though they think, ‘May we live free from hostility, free from violence, free from rivalry, free from ill will, free from those who are hostile’—they nevertheless live in hostility, violence, rivalry, ill will, with those who are hostile.”

Thus the Blessed One answered, having been asked by Sakka the deva-king. Gratified, Sakka was delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One’s words: “So it is, O Blessed One. So it is, O One Well-gone. Hearing the Blessed One’s answer to my question, my doubt is now cut off, my perplexity is overcome.”

Then Sakka, having delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One’s words, asked him a further question: “But what, dear sir, is the cause of envy & stinginess, what is their origination, what gives them birth, what is their source? When what exists do they come into being? When what doesn’t exist do they not?”

“Envy & stinginess have *dear-&-not-dear* [loved & not-loved] as their cause, have dear-&-not-dear as their origination, have dear-&-not-dear as what gives them birth, have dear-&-not-dear as their source. When dear-&-not-dear exist, they come into being. When dear-&-not-dear are not, they don’t.”

“But what, dear sir, is the cause of dear-&-not-dear, what is their origination, what gives them birth, what is their source? When what exists do they come into being? When what doesn’t exist do they not?”

“Dear-&-not-dear have *desire* as their cause, have desire as their origination, have desire as what gives them birth, have desire as their source. When desire exists, they come into being. When desire is not, they don’t.”

“But what, dear sir, is the cause of desire, what is its origination, what gives it birth, what is its source? When what exists does it come into being? When what doesn’t exist does it not?”

“Desire has *thinking* as its cause, has thinking as its origination, has thinking as what gives it birth, has thinking as its source. When thinking exists, desire comes into being. When thinking is not, it doesn’t.”

“But what, dear sir, is the cause of thinking, what is its origination, what gives it birth, what is its source? When what exists does it come into being? When what doesn’t exist does it not?”

“Thinking has the *perceptions & categories of objectification* [*papañca*] as its cause, has the perceptions & categories of objectification as its origination, has the

perceptions & categories of objectification as what gives it birth, has the perceptions & categories of objectification as its source. When the perceptions & categories of objectification exist, thinking comes into being. When the perceptions & categories of objectification are not, it doesn't."

"And how has he practiced, dear sir: the monk who has practiced the practice leading to the right cessation of the perceptions & categories of objectification?"

"Joy is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued. Grief is of two sorts: to be pursued & not to be pursued. Equanimity is of two sorts: to be pursued & not to be pursued.

"Joy is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of a feeling of joy, 'As I pursue this joy, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,' that sort of joy is not to be pursued. When one knows of a feeling of joy, 'As I pursue this joy, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,' that sort of joy is to be pursued. And this sort of joy may be accompanied by directed thought & evaluation or free of directed thought & evaluation. Of the two, the latter is the more refined. 'Joy is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

[Similarly with grief and equanimity.]

"This is how he has practiced, deva-king: the monk who has practiced the practice leading to the right cessation of the perceptions & categories of objectification." — *DN 21*

§ 2. Ven. MahāKaccāyana said this: "Concerning the brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he went into his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., 'If, with regard to the cause whereby the perceptions & categories of objectification assail a person, there is nothing there to relish, welcome, or remain fastened to, then that is the end of the obsessions of passion, the obsessions of resistance, the obsessions of views, the obsessions of uncertainty, the obsessions of conceit, the obsessions of passion for becoming, & the obsessions of ignorance. That is the end of taking up rods & bladed weapons, of arguments, quarrels, disputes, accusations, divisive tale-bearing, & false speech. That is where these evil, unskillful things cease without remainder'—I understand the detailed meaning to be this:

"Dependent on eye & forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there is feeling. What one feels, one perceives [labels, assigns a meaning in the mind]. What one perceives, one thinks about. What one thinks about, one objectifies. Based on what a person objectifies, the perceptions & categories of objectification assail him/her with regard to past, present, & future forms cognizable via the eye.

"Dependent on ear & sounds, ear-consciousness arises....

"Dependent on nose & aromas, nose-consciousness arises....

"Dependent on tongue & flavors, tongue-consciousness arises....

"Dependent on body & tactile sensations, body-consciousness arises....

“Dependent on intellect & ideas, intellect-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there is feeling. What one feels, one perceives. What one perceives, one thinks about. What one thinks about, one objectifies. Based on what a person objectifies, the perceptions & categories of objectification assail him/her with regard to past, present, & future ideas cognizable via the intellect.

“Now, when there is the eye, when there are forms, when there is eye-consciousness, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of contact. When there is a delineation of contact, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is a delineation of feeling, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is a delineation of perception, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is a delineation of thinking, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of objectification.

“When there is the ear....

“When there is the nose....

“When there is the tongue....

“When there is the body....

“When there is the intellect, when there are ideas, when there is intellect-consciousness, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of contact. When there is a delineation of contact, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is a delineation of feeling, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is a delineation of perception, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is a delineation of thinking, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of objectification.

“Now, when there is no eye, when there are no forms, when there is no eye-consciousness, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of contact. When there is no delineation of contact, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is no delineation of feeling, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is no delineation of perception, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is no delineation of thinking, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of objectification.

“When there is no ear....

“When there is no nose....

“When there is no tongue....

“When there is no body....

“When there is no intellect, when there are no ideas, when there is no intellect-consciousness, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of contact. When there is no delineation of contact, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is no delineation of feeling, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is no delineation of perception, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is no delineation of thinking, it is impossible that one will

delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of objectification.” — *MN 18*

§ 3. “For one arriving at what
does form disappear?
How do pleasure & pain disappear?
Tell me this.
My heart is set
on knowing how
they disappear.”

“One not percipient of perceptions
not percipient of special perceptions,
not unpercipient,
nor percipient of what’s disappeared¹:
For one arriving at this,
form disappears—
for objectification-classifications
have their cause in perception.” — *Sn 4:11*

NOTE: 1. According to the *MahāNiddesa*, this passage refers to the formless *jhānas*. But because the first three of those *jhānas* are based on perception, they would not fit this description. Only the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception would.

§ 4. “I ask the kinsman of the Sun, the great seer,
about seclusion & the state of peace.
Seeing in what way is a monk unbound,
clinging to nothing in the world?”

[The Buddha:] “He should put an entire stop
to the root of objectification-classifications:

‘I am the thinker.’
He should train, always mindful,
to subdue any craving inside him.
Whatever truth he may know,
within or without,
he shouldn’t get entrenched
in connection with it,
for that isn’t called
unbinding by the good.

He shouldn’t, because of it, think himself
better,
lower, or
equal.

Touched by contact in various ways,
 he shouldn't keep conjuring self.
 Stilled right within,
 a monk shouldn't seek peace from another,
 from anything else.

For one stilled right within,
 there's nothing embraced,
 so how rejected?

As in the middle of the sea
 it is still,
 with no waves upwelling,
 so the monk—unperturbed, still—
 should not swell himself
 anywhere." — *Sn 4:14*

§ 5. What is one? All beings subsist on nutriment. — *Khp 4*

§ 6. Then Ven. Rādhā went to the Blessed One and on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "‘A being,’ lord. ‘A being,’ it’s said. To what extent is one said to be ‘a being’?" "Any desire, passion, delight, or craving for form, Rādhā: When one is caught up [*satta*] there, tied up [*visatta*] there, one is said to be ‘a being [*satta*].’

"Any desire, passion, delight, or craving for feeling... perception... fabrications... consciousness, Rādhā: When one is caught up there, tied up there, one is said to be ‘a being.’" — *SN 23:2*

§ 7. "If one stays obsessed with form, that’s what one is measured/limited by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.

"If one stays obsessed with feeling...

"If one stays obsessed with perception...

"If one stays obsessed with fabrications...

"If one stays obsessed with consciousness, that’s what one is measured/limited by. Whatever one is measured by, that’s how one is classified.

"But if one doesn’t stay obsessed with form, monk, that’s not what one is measured/limited by. Whatever one isn’t measured by, that’s not how one is classified.

"If one doesn’t stay obsessed with feeling....

"If one doesn’t stay obsessed with perception....

"If one doesn’t stay obsessed with fabrications....

"If one doesn’t stay obsessed with consciousness, that’s not what one is measured/limited by. Whatever one isn’t measured by, that’s not how one is classified." — *SN 22:36*

§ 8. “There is the case, monks, where a certain contemplative or brahman, with the relinquishing of speculations about the past and the relinquishing of speculations about the future, from being totally not determined on the fetters of sensuality, and from the surmounting of the rapture of seclusion [in the first jhāna], of unworldly pleasure, & of the feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain [in the fourth jhāna], thinks, ‘I am at peace, I am unbound, I am without clinging/sustenance!’

“With regard to this, the Tathāgata discerns: ‘This venerable contemplative or brahman, with the relinquishing of speculations about the past... thinks, “I am at peace, I am unbound, I am without clinging/sustenance!” Yes, he affirms a practice conducive to unbinding. But still he clings, clinging to a speculation about the past or... a speculation about the future... or a fetter of sensuality... or the rapture of seclusion... or unworldly pleasure... or a feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain. And the fact that he thinks, “I am at peace, I am unbound, I am without clinging/sustenance!”—that in itself points to his clinging.’

“With regard to this—fabricated, gross—there is still the cessation of fabrications. Knowing, ‘There is that,’ seeing the escape from it, the Tathāgata has gone beyond it.” — MN 102

§ 9. “‘After death a Tathāgata exists’—this craving-standpoint, this perception-standpoint, this product of conceiving, this product of objectification, this clinging-standpoint: That’s [an expression of] anguish.¹ ‘After death a Tathāgata doesn’t exist’.... ‘After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist’.... That’s anguish. ‘After death a Tathāgata neither does nor does not exist’—this craving-standpoint, this perception-standpoint, this product of conceiving, this product of objectification, this clinging-standpoint: That’s anguish.

“The uninstructed run-of-the-mill person doesn’t discern anguish, doesn’t discern the origination of anguish, doesn’t discern the cessation of anguish, doesn’t discern the path of practice leading to the cessation of anguish, and so for him that anguish grows. He is not freed from birth, aging, & death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, and despairs. He is not freed, I tell you, from suffering & stress.

“But the instructed disciple of the noble ones discerns anguish, discerns the origination of anguish, discerns the cessation of anguish, discerns the path of practice leading to the cessation of anguish, and so for him that anguish ceases. He is freed from birth, aging, & death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, and despairs. He is freed, I tell you, from suffering & stress.

“Thus knowing, thus seeing, the instructed disciple of the noble ones doesn’t declare that ‘After death a Tathāgata exists,’ doesn’t declare that ‘After death a Tathāgata does not exist,’ doesn’t declare that ‘After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist,’ doesn’t declare that ‘After death a Tathāgata neither does nor does not exist.’ Thus knowing, thus seeing, he is thus of a nature not to declare the undeclared issues. Thus knowing, thus seeing, he isn’t paralyzed, doesn’t quake, doesn’t shiver or shake over the undeclared issues.” — AN 7:51

§ 10. “There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person... doesn’t discern which ideas are fit for attention, or which ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he doesn’t attend to ideas fit for attention, and attends [instead] to ideas unfit for attention. And which are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to? Whichever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation [*āsava*] of sensuality arises, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality increases; the unarisen fermentation of becoming... the unarisen fermentation of ignorance arises, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance increases.... This is how he attends inappropriately: ‘Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?’ Or else he is inwardly perplexed about the immediate present: ‘Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?’

“As he attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of view arises in him: The view *I have a self* arises in him as true & established, or the view *I have no self*... or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self*... or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self*... or the view *It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self*² arises in him as true & established, or else he has a view like this: *This very self of mine—the knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions—is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will endure as long as eternity*. This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is not freed from birth, aging, & death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from stress.

“The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones... discerns which ideas are fit for attention, and which ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he doesn’t attend to ideas unfit for attention, and attends [instead] to ideas fit for attention.... And which are the ideas fit for attention that he attends to? Whichever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality doesn’t arise, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen fermentation of becoming... the unarisen fermentation of ignorance doesn’t arise, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance is abandoned.... He attends appropriately, *This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress*. As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: identity-view, uncertainty, and grasping at habits & practices.”— MN 2

§ 11. “And which craving is the ensnarer that has flowed along, spread out, and caught hold, with which this world is smothered & enveloped like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, & bad

destinations? These 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is internal and 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is external.

“And which are the 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is internal? There being ‘I am,’ there comes to be ‘I am here,’ there comes to be ‘I am like this’ ... ‘I am otherwise’ ... ‘I am bad’ ... ‘I am good’ ... ‘I might be’ ... ‘I might be here’ ... ‘I might be like this’ ... ‘I might be otherwise’ ... ‘May I be’ ... ‘May I be here’ ... ‘May I be like this’ ... ‘May I be otherwise’ ... ‘I will be’ ... ‘I will be here’ ... ‘I will be like this’ ... ‘I will be otherwise.’ These are the 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is internal.

“And which are the 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is external? There being ‘I am because of this [or: by means of this],’ there comes to be ‘I am here because of this,’ there comes to be ‘I am like this because of this’ ... ‘I am otherwise because of this’ ... ‘I am bad because of this’ ... ‘I am good because of this’ ... ‘I might be because of this’ ... ‘I might be here because of this’ ... ‘I might be like this because of this’ ... ‘I might be otherwise because of this’ ... ‘May I be because of this’ ... ‘May I be here because of this’ ... ‘May I be like this because of this’ ... ‘May I be otherwise because of this’ ... ‘I will be because of this’ ... ‘I will be here because of this’ ... ‘I will be like this because of this’ ... ‘I will be otherwise because of this.’ These are the 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is external.

“Thus there are 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is internal and 18 craving-verbalizations dependent on what is external. These are called the 36 craving-verbalizations. Thus, with 36 craving-verbalizations of this sort in the past, 36 in the future, and 36 in the present, there are 108 craving-verbalizations.

“This, monks is craving the ensnarer that has flowed along, spread out, and caught hold, with which this world is smothered & enveloped like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, & bad destinations.” — AN 4:199

§ 12. “What one intends, what one arranges, and what one obsesses about¹: This is a support for the stationing of consciousness. There being a support, there is a landing of consciousness. When that consciousness lands and grows, there is the production of renewed becoming in the future. When there is the production of renewed becoming in the future, there is future birth, aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. Such is the origination of this entire mass of suffering & stress.

“If one doesn’t intend and doesn’t arrange, but one still obsesses [about something], this is a support for the stationing of consciousness. There being a support, there is a landing of consciousness. When that consciousness lands and grows, there is the production of renewed becoming in the future. When there is the production of renewed becoming in the future, there is future birth, aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. Such [too] is the origination of this entire mass of suffering & stress.

“But when one doesn’t intend, arrange, or obsess [about anything], there is no support for the stationing of consciousness. There being no support, there is no landing of consciousness. When that consciousness doesn’t land & grow, there is no production of renewed becoming in the future. When there is no production of renewed becoming in the future, there is no future birth, aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, or despair. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of suffering & stress.” — SN 12:38

NOTE: 1. The seven obsessions are: the obsession of sensual passion, the obsession of resistance, the obsession of views, the obsession of uncertainty, the obsession of conceit, the obsession of passion for becoming, and the obsession of ignorance.

§ 13. “Monks, there are these four nutriments for the maintenance of beings who have come into being or for the support of those in search of a place to be born. Which four? Physical food, gross or refined; contact as the second; intellectual intention the third; and consciousness the fourth. These are the four nutriments for the maintenance of beings who have come into being or for the support of those in search of a place to be born.”

When this was said, Ven. Moliya Phagguna said to the Blessed One, “Lord, who feeds on the consciousness-nutriment?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “I don’t say ‘feeds.’ If I were to say ‘feeds,’ then ‘Who feeds on the consciousness-nutriment?’ would be a valid question. But I don’t say that. When I don’t say that, the valid question is, ‘Consciousness-nutriment for what?’ And the valid answer is, ‘Consciousness-nutriment for the production of future coming-into-being. When that has come into being and exists, then the six sense media. From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact.’”

“Lord, who makes contact?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “I don’t say ‘makes contact.’ If I were to say ‘makes contact,’ then ‘Who makes contact?’ would be a valid question. But I don’t say that. When I don’t say that, the valid question is, ‘From what as a requisite condition comes contact?’ And the valid answer is, ‘From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact. From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.’”

“Lord, who feels?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “I don’t say ‘feels.’ If I were to say ‘feels,’ then ‘Who feels?’ would be a valid question. But I don’t say that. When I don’t say that, the valid question is, ‘From what as a requisite condition comes feeling?’ And the valid answer is, ‘From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.’”

“Lord, who craves?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “I don’t say ‘craves.’ If I were to say ‘craves,’ then ‘Who craves?’ would be a valid question. But I don’t say that. When I don’t say that, the valid question is, ‘From what as a requisite condition comes craving?’ And the valid answer is, ‘From feeling as a requisite condition

comes craving. From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging/sustenance.”

“Lord, who clings?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “I don’t say ‘clings.’ If I were to say ‘clings,’ then ‘Who clings?’ would be a valid question. But I don’t say that. When I don’t say that, the valid question is, ‘From what as a requisite condition comes clinging?’ And the valid answer is, ‘From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging. From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. From birth as a requisite condition, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress & suffering.’¹

“Now from the remainderless fading & cessation of the six sense media² comes the cessation of contact. From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling. From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving. From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance. From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming. From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth. From the cessation of birth, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of stress & suffering.” — SN 12:12

NOTE: 1. An alternative translation for this exchange—and one that, in light of the topic of nutriment, might actually be more apt—is:

“Lord, who takes sustenance?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “I don’t say ‘takes sustenance.’ If I were to say ‘takes sustenance,’ then ‘Who takes sustenance?’ would be a valid question. But I don’t say that. When I don’t say that, the valid question is, ‘From what as a requisite condition comes sustenance?’ And the valid answer is, ‘From craving as a requisite condition comes sustenance. From sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming. From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. From birth as a requisite condition, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress & suffering.’”

2. This refers to the moment of awakening, when the six sense media are transcended. See the discussion of “consciousness without surface” in *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*, chapter 1.

§ 14. The Blessed One said, “From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.... From birth as a requisite condition, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress & suffering.”

When this was said, a certain monk said to the Blessed One: “Which is the aging-&-death, lord, and whose is the aging-&-death?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “If one were to ask, ‘Which is the aging-&-death, and whose is the aging-&-death?’ and if one were to say, ‘Aging-&-death is one thing, and the aging-&-death is something/someone else’s,’ both of them would have the same meaning, even though their words

would differ. When there is the view that the soul is the same as the body, there is no leading the holy life. And when there is the view that the soul is one thing and the body another, there is no leading the holy life. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma via the middle: From birth as a requisite condition comes aging-&-death."

"Which is the birth, lord, and whose is the birth?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth."

"Which is the becoming, lord, and whose is the becoming?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming."

"Which is the clinging, lord, and whose is the clinging?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging."

"Which is the craving, lord, and whose is the craving?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving."

"Which is the feeling, lord, and whose is the feeling?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling."

"Which is the contact, lord, and whose is the contact?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact."

"Which are the six sense media, lord, and whose are the six sense media?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From name-&-form as a requisite condition come the six sense media."

"Which is the name-&-form, lord, and whose is the name-&-form?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form."

"Which is the consciousness, lord, and whose is the consciousness?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said.... "From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness."

"Which are the fabrications, lord, and whose are the fabrications?"

"Not a valid question," the Blessed One said. "If one were to ask, 'Which are the fabrications, and whose are the fabrications?' and if one were to say, 'Fabrications are one thing, and these fabrications are something/someone else's,' both of them would have the same meaning, even though their words would differ. When there is the view that the soul is the same as the body, there is no leading the holy life. And when there is the view that the soul is one thing and the body another, there is no leading the holy life. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma via the middle: From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.

"Now from the remainderless fading & cessation of that very ignorance, every one of these writhings & wriggings & wiggings—'Which aging-&-death, and whose aging-&-death?' or 'Aging-&-death is one thing, and this aging-&-death is something/someone else's' or 'The soul is the same as the body,' or 'The

soul is one thing and the body another’—are abandoned, their root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising.

“From the remainderless fading & cessation of that very ignorance, every one of these writhings & wriggings & wiggings—‘Which is the birth.... Which is the becoming.... Which is the clinging.... Which is the craving.... Which is the feeling.... Which is the contact.... Which are the six sense media.... Which is the name-&-form.... Which is the consciousness.... Which are the fabrications, and whose are the fabrications?’ or ‘Fabrications are one thing, and these fabrications are something/someone else’s’ or ‘The soul is the same as the body,’ or ‘The soul is one thing and the body another’—are abandoned, their root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising.” — *SN 12:35*

USEFUL PAPAÑCA

§ 15. Ven. Ananda: “‘This body comes into being through conceit. And yet it is by relying on conceit that conceit is to be abandoned.’ Thus it was said. And in reference to what was it said? There is the case, sister, where a monk hears, ‘The monk named such-and-such, they say, through the ending of the fermentations, has entered & remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now.’ The thought occurs to him, ‘The monk named such-&-such, they say, through the ending of the fermentations, has entered & remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now. Then why not me?’ Then, at a later time, he abandons conceit, having relied on conceit.” — *AN 4:159*

§ 16. “And what is the self as a governing principle? There is the case where a monk, having gone to a wilderness, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty dwelling, reflects on this: ‘It’s not for the sake of robes that I have gone forth from the home life into homelessness; it’s not for the sake of almsfood, for the sake of lodgings, or for the sake of this or that state of [future] becoming that I have gone forth from the home life into homelessness. Simply that I am beset by birth, aging, & death; by sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs; beset by stress, overcome with stress, [and I hope,] ‘Perhaps the end of this entire mass of suffering & stress might be known!’ Now, if I were to seek the same sort of sensual pleasures that I abandoned in going forth from home into homelessness—or a worse sort—that would not be fitting for me.’ So he reflects on this: ‘My persistence will be aroused & not lax; my mindfulness established & not confused; my body calm & not aroused; my mind centered & unified.’ Having made himself his governing principle, he abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is unblameworthy, and looks after himself in a pure way. This is called the self as a governing principle.” — *AN 3:40*

§ 17. [A1.] “Now, householders, of those contemplatives & brahmins who hold this doctrine, hold this view—‘There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed. There is no fruit or result of good or bad actions. There is no this world, no next world, no mother, no father, no spontaneously reborn beings; no contemplatives or brahmins who, faring rightly and practicing rightly, proclaim this world and the next after having directly known and realized it for themselves’—it can be expected that, shunning these three skillful activities—good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, good mental conduct—they will adopt & practice these three unskillful activities: bad bodily conduct, bad verbal conduct, bad mental conduct. Why is that? Because those venerable contemplatives & brahmins do not see, in unskillful activities, the drawbacks, the degradation, and the defilement; nor in skillful activities the rewards of renunciation, resembling cleansing.

[A2.] “Because there actually is the next world, the view of one who thinks, ‘There is no next world’ is his wrong view. Because there actually is the next world, when he is resolved that ‘There is no next world,’ that is his wrong resolve. Because there actually is the next world, when he speaks the statement, ‘There is no next world,’ that is his wrong speech. Because there actually is the next world, when he says that ‘There is no next world,’ he makes himself an opponent to those arahants who know the next world. Because there actually is the next world, when he persuades another that ‘There is no next world,’ that is persuasion in what is not true Dhamma. And in that persuasion in what is not true Dhamma, he exalts himself and disparages others. Whatever good habituation he previously had is abandoned, while bad habituation is manifested. And this wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, opposition to the arahants, persuasion in what is not true Dhamma, exaltation of self, & disparagement of others: These many evil, unskillful activities come into play, in dependence on wrong view.

[A3.] “With regard to this, an observant person considers thus: ‘If there is no next world, then—with the breakup of the body, after death—this venerable person has made himself safe. But if there is the next world, then this venerable person—on the breakup of the body, after death—will reappear in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. Even if we didn’t speak of the next world, and there weren’t the true statement of those venerable contemplatives & brahmins, this venerable person is still criticized in the here-&-now by the observant as a person of bad habits & wrong view¹: one who holds to a doctrine of non-existence.’ If there really is a next world, then this venerable person has made a bad throw twice: in that he is criticized by the observant here-&-now, and in that—with the breakup of the body, after death—he will reappear in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. Thus this safe-bet teaching, when poorly grasped & poorly adopted by him, covers (only) one side, and leaves behind the possibility of the skillful.

[B1.] “Now, householders, of those contemplatives & brahmins who hold this doctrine, hold this view—‘There is what is given, what is offered, what is sacrificed. There are fruits & results of good & bad actions. There is this world &

the next world. There is mother & father. There are spontaneously reborn beings; there are contemplatives & brahmans who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves’—it can be expected that, shunning these three unskillful activities—bad bodily conduct, bad verbal conduct, bad mental conduct—they will adopt & practice these three skillful activities: good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, good mental conduct. Why is that? Because those venerable contemplatives & brahmans see in unskillful activities the drawbacks, the degradation, and the defilement; and in skillful activities the rewards of renunciation, resembling cleansing.

[B2.] “Because there actually is the next world, the view of one who thinks, ‘There is a next world’ is his right view. Because there actually is the next world, when he is resolved that ‘There is a next world,’ that is his right resolve. Because there actually is the next world, when he speaks the statement, ‘There is a next world,’ that is his right speech. Because there actually is the next world, when he is says that ‘There is a next world,’ he doesn’t make himself an opponent to those arahants who know the next world. Because there actually is the next world, when he persuades another that ‘There is a next world,’ that is persuasion in what is true Dhamma. And in that persuasion in what is true Dhamma, he doesn’t exalt himself or disparage others. Whatever bad habituation he previously had is abandoned, while good habituation is manifested. And this right view, right resolve, right speech, non-opposition to the arahants, persuasion in what is true Dhamma, non-exaltation of self, & non-disparagement of others: These many skillful activities come into play, in dependence on right view.

[B3.] “With regard to this, an observant person considers thus: ‘If there is the next world, then this venerable person—on the breakup of the body, after death—will reappear in a good destination, a heavenly world. Even if we didn’t speak of the next world, and there weren’t the true statement of those venerable contemplatives & brahmans, this venerable person is still praised in the here-&-now by the observant as a person of good habits & right view: one who holds to a doctrine of existence.’ If there really is a next world, then this venerable person has made a good throw twice, in that he is praised by the observant here-&-now; and in that—with the breakup of the body, after death—he will reappear in a good destination, a heavenly world. Thus this safe-bet teaching, when well grasped & adopted by him, covers both sides, and leaves behind the possibility of the unskillful.” — *MN 60*

NOTE: 1. In this context—where that actual truth or falseness of the doctrine is not being addressed—“wrong view” would have to mean a view that leads a person to engage in bad conduct in body, speech, or mind.

§ 18. At Sāvattī. There the Blessed One said: “From an inconceivable beginning comes transmigration. A beginning point is not evident, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating &

wandering on. When you see someone who has fallen on hard times, overwhelmed with hard times, you should conclude: ‘We, too, have experienced just this sort of thing in the course of that long, long time.’ ... When you see someone who is happy & well-provided in life, you should conclude: ‘We, too, have experienced just this sort of thing in the course of that long, long time.’

“Why is that? From an inconceivable beginning comes transmigration. A beginning point is not evident, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating & wandering on. Long have you thus experienced stress, experienced pain, experienced loss, swelling the cemeteries—enough to become disenchanted with all fabricated things, enough to become dispassionate, enough to be released.” — *SN 15:11-12*

§ 19. Now on that occasion the Blessed One was dwelling in Rājagaha, in the Bamboo Grove. Then thirty monks from Pāva—all wilderness dwellers, all alms-goers, all triple-robe wearers, all still with fetters, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side.

Then the thought occurred to the Blessed One, “These thirty monks from Pāva... are all still with fetters. What if I were to teach them the Dhamma in such a way that in this very sitting their minds, through lack of clinging, would be released from fermentations?”

So he addressed the monks: “Monks.”

“Yes, lord,” the monks responded.

The Blessed One said, “From an inconceivable beginning comes transmigration. A beginning point is not evident, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating & wandering on. What do you think, monks? Which is greater, the blood you have shed from having your heads cut off while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time, or the water in the four great oceans?”

“As we understand the Dhamma taught to us by the Blessed One, this is the greater: the blood we have shed from having our heads cut off while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time, not the water in the four great oceans.”

“Excellent, monks. Excellent. It is excellent that you thus understand the Dhamma taught by me.

“This is the greater: the blood you have shed from having your heads cut off while transmigrating & wandering this long, long time, not the water in the four great oceans.

“The blood you have shed when, being cows, you had your cow-heads cut off: Long has this been greater than the water in the four great oceans.

“The blood you have shed when, being water buffaloes, you had your water buffalo-heads cut off... when, being rams, you had your ram-heads cut off... when, being goats, you had your goat-heads cut off... when, being deer, you had your deer-heads cut off... when, being chickens, you had your chicken-heads cut off... when, being pigs, you had your pig-heads cut off: Long has this been greater than the water in the four great oceans.

“The blood you have shed when, arrested as thieves plundering villages, you had your heads cut off... when, arrested as highway thieves, you had your heads cut off... when, arrested as adulterers, you had your heads cut off: Long has this been greater than the water in the four great oceans.

“Why is that? From an inconceivable beginning comes transmigration. A beginning point is not evident, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating & wandering on. Long have you thus experienced stress, experienced pain, experienced loss, swelling the cemeteries—enough to become disenchanting with all fabrications, enough to become dispassionate, enough to be released.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words. And while this explanation was being given, the minds of the thirty monks from Pāva—through lack of clinging—were released from fermentations. — *SN 15:13*

§ 20. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Monks, don’t be afraid of acts of merit. This is another way of saying what is blissful, desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming—i.e., acts of merit. I am cognizant that, having long performed meritorious deeds, I long experienced desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming results. Having developed a mind of good will for seven years, then for seven aeons of contraction & expansion I didn’t return to this world. Whenever the aeon was contracting, I went to the realm of Streaming Radiance. Whenever the aeon was expanding, I reappeared in an empty Brahma-abode. There I was the Great Brahman, the Unconquered Conqueror, All-seeing, & Wielder of Power. Then for 36 times I was Sakka, the deva-king. For many hundreds of times I was a king, a wheel-turning emperor, a righteous king of Dhamma, conqueror of the four corners of the earth, maintaining stable control over the countryside, endowed with the seven treasures¹—to say nothing of the times I was a local king. The thought occurred to me: ‘Of what action of mine is this the fruit, of what action the result, that I now have such great power & might?’ Then the thought occurred to me: ‘This is the fruit of my three [types of] action, the result of three types of action, that I now have such great power & might: i.e., generosity, self-control, & restraint.’”

Train in acts of merit
 that bring long-lasting bliss—
 develop generosity,
 a life in tune,
 a mind of good-will.
 Developing these
 three things
 that bring about bliss,
 the wise reappear
 in a world of bliss
 unalloyed.

— *Iti 22*

NOTE: 1. The seven treasures are a divine wheel, an ideal jewel, an ideal elephant, an ideal horse, an ideal wife, an ideal treasurer, and an ideal counselor.

§ 21. “Once, monks, there was a king named Pacetana. One day King Pacetana said to his chariot maker, ‘My good chariot maker, in six months time from now a battle will take place. Can you make me a new pair of chariot wheels?’

“‘Yes, your majesty, I can,’ the chariot maker replied to the king.

“Then in six months minus six days the chariot maker finished one wheel. King Pacetana said to him, ‘In six days time from now the battle will take place. Will the pair of chariot wheels be finished?’

“‘Your majesty, in these six months minus six days, I have finished one wheel.’

“‘But can you finish the second wheel in these six days?’

“‘Yes, your majesty, I can,’ the chariot maker replied to the king.

Then, after finishing the second wheel in six days, the chariot maker took the pair of wheels to the king and, on arrival, said to him, ‘Here is your new pair of chariot wheels all finished, your majesty.’

“‘And what is the difference between your wheel that took six months minus six days to finish, and your wheel that took six days to finish? I don’t see any difference between them at all.’

“‘There is a difference between them, your majesty. Look at the difference.’ Then the chariot maker took the chariot wheel that took six days to finish and set it rolling. Going as far as its momentum carried it, it twirled around and around and fell to the ground. But then he took the chariot wheel that took six months minus six days to finish and set it rolling. Going as far as its momentum carried it, it stood still as if fixed on an axle.

“‘Now what is the reason, my good chariot maker, what is the cause, why the chariot wheel that took six days to finish, when set rolling, goes as far as its momentum carries it and then, twirling around and around, falls to the ground? And what is the reason, what is the cause, why the chariot wheel that took six months minus six days to finish, when set rolling, goes as far as its momentum carries it and then stands still as if fixed on an axle?’

“‘Your majesty, as for the wheel that took six days to finish, its rim is crooked, with faults & flaws. Its spokes are crooked, with faults & flaws. Its hub is crooked, with faults & flaws. Because its rim... spokes... [&] hub are crooked, with faults & flaws, when set rolling it goes as far as its momentum carries it and then, twirling around and around, falls to the ground. But as for the wheel that took six months minus six days to finish, its rim is not crooked, with no faults or flaws. Its spokes are not crooked, with no faults or flaws. Its hub is not crooked, with no faults or flaws. Because its rim... spokes... [&] hub are not crooked, with no faults or flaws, when set rolling it goes as far as its momentum carries it and then stands still as if fixed on an axle.’

“Now, monks, the thought may occur to you that the chariot maker on that occasion was someone else, but it shouldn’t be seen in that way. I myself was the chariot maker on that occasion. I was skilled in dealing with the crookedness, the

faults, the flaws of wood. Now I am a worthy one, rightly self-awakened, skilled in dealing with the crookedness, faults, & flaws of bodily action; skilled in dealing with the crookedness, faults, & flaws of verbal action; skilled in dealing with the crookedness, faults, & flaws of mental action.

“Any monk or nun in whom the crookedness, faults, & flaws of bodily action are not abandoned; the crookedness, faults, & flaws of verbal action are not abandoned; the crookedness, faults, & flaws of mental action are not abandoned has fallen away from this Dhamma & Discipline, just like the wheel that took six days to finish. But any monk or nun in whom the crookedness, faults, & flaws of bodily action are abandoned; the crookedness, faults, & flaws of verbal action are abandoned; the crookedness, faults, & flaws of mental action are abandoned stands firm in this Dhamma & Discipline, just like the wheel that took six months minus six days to finish.

“Thus you should train yourselves: ‘We will abandon crookedness, faults, & flaws in bodily action. We will abandon crookedness, faults, & flaws in verbal action. We will abandon crookedness, faults, & flaws in mental action.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” — *AN 3:15*

UNDERSTANDING REBIRTH WITHOUT PAPAÑCA

§ 22. “But, Master Gotama, at the moment a flame is being swept on by the wind and goes a far distance, what do you designate as its clinging/sustenance then?”

“Vaccha, when a flame is being swept on by the wind and goes a far distance, I designate it as wind-sustained, for the wind is its clinging/sustenance at that time.”

“And at the moment when a being sets this body aside and is not yet born in another body, what do you designate as its clinging/sustenance then?”

“Vaccha, when a being sets this body aside and is not yet born in another body, I designate it as craving-sustained, for craving is its clinging/sustenance at that time.” — *SN 44:9*

§ 23. “Where there is passion, delight, & craving for the nutriment of physical food, consciousness lands there and increases. Where consciousness lands and increases, there is the alighting of name-&-form. Where there is the alighting of name-&-form, there is the growth of fabrications. Where there is the growth of fabrications, there is the production of renewed becoming in the future. Where there is the production of renewed becoming in the future, there is future birth, aging, & death, together, I tell you, with sorrow, affliction, & despair....

“[Similarly with the nutriment of (sensory) contact, the nutriment of intellectual intention, and the nutriment of (sensory) consciousness.]” — *SN 12:64*

§ 24. “These four nutriments have craving as their cause, craving as their origination, are born from craving, are brought into being from craving.” — *MN 38*

§ 25. “Like the earth property, monks, is how the four standing-spots for consciousness should be seen. Like the liquid property is how delight & passion should be seen. Like the five means of propagation is how consciousness together with its nutriment should be seen.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to (a physical) form, supported by form (as its object), landing on form, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to feeling, supported by feeling (as its object), landing on feeling, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to perception, supported by perception (as its object), landing on perception, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to fabrications, supported by fabrications (as its object), landing on fabrications, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Were someone to say, ‘I will describe a coming, a going, a passing away, an arising, a growth, an increase, or a proliferation of consciousness apart from form, from feeling, from perception, from fabrications,’ that would be impossible.

“If a monk abandons passion for the property of form

“If a monk abandons passion for the property of feeling

“If a monk abandons passion for the property of perception ...

“If a monk abandons passion for the property of fabrications

“If a monk abandons passion for the property of consciousness, then owing to the abandonment of passion, the support is cut off, and there is no landing of consciousness. Consciousness, thus not having landed, not increasing, not concocting, is released. Owing to its release, it is steady. Owing to its steadiness, it is contented. Owing to its contentment, it is not agitated. Not agitated, he (the monk) is totally unbound right within. He discerns that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’” — *SN 22:54*

§ 26. “And, monks, as long as this—my three-round, twelve-permutation knowledge & vision concerning these four noble truths as they have come to be—was not pure, I did not claim to have directly awakened to the right self-awakening unexcelled in the cosmos with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, with its people with their contemplatives & brahmins, their royalty & commonfolk. But as soon as this—my three-round, twelve-permutation knowledge & vision concerning these four noble truths as they have come to be—was truly pure, then I did claim to have directly awakened to the right self-awakening unexcelled in the cosmos with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, with its people with their contemplatives & brahmins, their royalty & commonfolk. Knowledge & vision arose in me: ‘Unprovoked is my release. This is the last birth. There is now no further becoming.’” — *SN 56:11*

§ 27. Then Ven. MahāKoṭṭhita went to Ven. Sāriputta and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to Ven. Sāriputta, “With the remainderless cessation & fading of the six contact-media [vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch, & intellection], is it the case that there is anything else?”

[Ven. Sāriputta:] “Don’t say that, my friend.”

[Ven. MahāKoṭṭhita:] “With the remainderless cessation & fading of the six contact-media, is it the case that there is not anything else?”

[Ven. Sāriputta:] “Don’t say that, my friend.”

[Ven. MahāKoṭṭhita:] “...is it the case that there both is & is not anything else?”

[Ven. Sāriputta:] “Don’t say that, my friend.”

[Ven. MahāKoṭṭhita:] “...is it the case that there neither is nor is not anything else?”

[Ven. Sāriputta:] “Don’t say that, my friend.”

[Ven. MahāKoṭṭhita:] “Being asked if, with the remainderless cessation & fading of the six contact-media, there is anything else, you say, ‘Don’t say that, my friend.’ Being asked if... there is not anything else... there both is & is not anything else... there neither is nor is not anything else, you say, ‘Don’t say that, my friend.’ Now, how is the meaning of your words to be understood?”

[Ven. Sāriputta:] “The statement, ‘With the remainderless cessation & fading of the six contact-media is it the case that there is anything else?’ objectifies the non-objectified. The statement, ‘... is it the case that there is not anything else... is it the case that there both is & is not anything else... is it the case that there neither is nor is not anything else?’ objectifies the non-objectified. However far the six contact-media go, that is how far objectification goes. However far objectification goes, that is how far the six contact media go. With the remainderless fading & cessation of the six contact-media, there comes to be the cessation, the allaying of objectification.” — AN 4:173