

SN 12.25
Nidāna Saṃyutta
(Connected Discourses On Causation)
Dasabala Vagga
(The Section on the Ten Powers)

Bhūmija Sutta
“To Bhūmija”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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One evening, while The Blessed One was living in the City of Sāvattṥī, the Venerable Bhūmija came out of his afternoon meditation and went to see the Venerable Sāriputta.

After exchanging friendly greetings with the Venerable Sāriputta and once their cordial talk was over, the Venerable Bhūmija sat down at one side and said to the Venerable Sāriputta:

“Friend Sāriputta, there are some recluses and brahmins, proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are both produced by oneself; meanwhile, some other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, teach that pleasure and pain are produced by another; while other recluses and brahmins, proponents of Kamma, teach that pleasure and pain are produced both by oneself and by another; while still other recluses and brahmins, again proponents of Kamma, maintain that pleasure and pain are simply produced randomly or by chance, without having an author, being neither produced by oneself nor by another.

“Now, Friend Sāriputta, what is The Blessed One’s position on this? How does He teach or explain this?

“If we are to be asked on this, how should our answer be, if we are to speak and be properly reflecting what has been said by The Blessed One Himself, so that we do not misrepresent Him with what is untrue? Thus, how should we explain this matter according to the Dhamma, in a manner, where there could not be any possibility for us to be criticized, or to give anyone the possibility or the grounds to rebuke or chastise us on this?”

“Friend, The Blessed One has said that pleasure and pain are both produced by depending on their condition. And what is this condition of theirs? They both depend on contact, in order for them to manifest.

“Now, if you were to answer in this manner to that question you raised, then you would be speaking and reflecting properly what has been said by The Blessed One Himself, and therefore, you would not be misrepresenting Him with what is untrue. Thus, you would explain this matter

according to the Dhamma, and in a manner, where there could not be any possibility for you to be criticized, nor to give anyone the possibility or the grounds to rebuke or chastise you on this.

“Now, Friend, as it relates to those recluses and brahmins, proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are both produced by oneself, and those other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced by another; while other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced both by oneself and by another; while still other recluses and brahmins, again proponents of Kamma, maintain that pleasure and pain are simply produced randomly or by chance, without having an author, being neither produced by oneself nor by another, in each and all of these cases, the answer is the same: ‘That also is conditioned by Contact!’

“Therefore, Friend, as it relates to those recluses and brahmins, proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are both produced by oneself, and those other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced by another; while other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced both by oneself and by another; while still other recluses and brahmins, again proponents of Kamma, maintain that pleasure and pain are simply produced randomly or by chance, without having an author, being neither produced by oneself nor by another, in each and all of these cases, the answer is the same: ‘It is simply impossible that anyone of these recluses or brahmins could have *any* experience, *without* first there being Contact.’

Meanwhile, the Venerable Ānanda heard this conversation that was taking place between the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Bhūmija.

After he left, he went and approached The Blessed One, and once having paid homage to Him, the Venerable Ānanda sat down at one side, and recounted to The Blessed One the entire conversation that took place between the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Bhūmija. And The Blessed One said:

“Very good, Ānanda! Very good! Anyone answering correctly to such a question, would answer just as Sāriputta has done.

“For, I have declared, Ānanda, that pleasure and pain are both produced by depending on their condition. And what is this condition of theirs? They both depend on contact in order for them to manifest.

“And, if anyone were to answer in this manner to that question being raised, then they would be speaking and reflecting properly what has been said by me, and therefore, they would not be misrepresenting me with what is untrue. Thus, they would explain this matter according to the Dhamma, and in a manner, where there could not be any possibility for them to be criticized, nor to give anyone the possibility or the grounds to rebuke or chastise them on this.

“Now, Ānanda, as it relates to those recluses and brahmins, proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are both produced by oneself, and those other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced by another; while other

recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced both by oneself and by another; while still other recluses and brahmins, again proponents of Kamma, maintain that pleasure and pain are simply produced randomly or by chance, without having an author, being neither produced by oneself nor by another, in each and all of these cases, the answer is the same: ‘That also is conditioned by Contact!’

“Therefore, Ānanda, as it relates to those recluses and brahmins, proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are both produced by oneself, and those other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced by another; while other recluses and brahmins, also proponents of Kamma, who teach that pleasure and pain are produced both by oneself and by another; while still other recluses and brahmins, again proponents of Kamma, maintain that pleasure and pain are simply produced randomly or by chance, without having an author, being neither produced by oneself nor by another, in each and all of these cases, the answer is the same: ‘It is simply impossible that anyone of these recluses or brahmins could have *any* experience, *without* first there being Contact.’

“For, Ānanda, so long as there is a body, then there is also the cause for intentional bodily actions that result in the experiencing of pleasure or pain.

“So long as there is speech, then there is also the cause for intentional verbal actions that result in the experiencing of pleasure or pain.

“And so long as there is a mind, then there is also the cause for intentional mental actions that result in the experiencing of pleasure or pain.

“However, Ānanda, all these three depend on and are conditioned by the person’s lack in wisdom, conditioned by their stupidity.

“After all, Ānanda, it is either by one’s own initiative that one intends on engaging in bodily generative causes (*kāya saṅkhārā*) within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, it is through the influence and instigation of others that one fosters certain bodily generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, deliberately and with full conscious awareness, one fosters certain bodily generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, by not being aware, or while even unconscious, one fosters certain bodily generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Similarly, Ānanda, it is either by one’s own initiative that one intends on engaging in verbal generative causes (*vacī saṅkhārā*) within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, it is through the influence and instigation of others that one fosters certain verbal generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, deliberately and with full conscious awareness, one fosters certain verbal generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, by not being aware, or while even unconscious, one fosters certain verbal generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Similarly, Ānanda, it is either by one’s own initiative that one intends on engaging in mental generative causes (*vacī saṅkhārā*) within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, it is through the influence and instigation of others that one fosters certain mental generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, deliberately and with full conscious awareness, one fosters certain mental generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Or Ānanda, by not being aware, or while even unconscious, one fosters certain mental generative causes within oneself, resulting in the performance of certain actions, whereby one experiences pleasure or pain.

“Therefore, Ānanda, stupidity is to be found as the common factor within all these states.

“However, Ānanda, when stupidity fades away and completely ends without a trace, then there will be no more a body as such, that serves as a condition for the experiencing of pleasure and pain. Similarly, there will be no more speech as such, that serves as a condition for the experiencing of pleasure and pain. Also, there will be no more a mind as such, that serves as a condition for the experiencing of pleasure and pain.

“Thus, Ānanda, for such a person there is no bedrock, no range, no site, nor any kind of foundation left, to serve as a condition for the possibility of pleasure or pain to ever rise again.”

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