

(寂滅).<sup>15</sup> The Buddha's response to this disagreement, according to SN, is that he teaches both two feelings and three feelings, and even five, six, eighteen, thirty-six, and 108 feelings – without saying what they are; and according to the SA counterpart it is that he sometimes speaks of one feeling, or two, or three, four, five, six, eighteen, thirty-six, 108, or even innumerable feelings (無量受) – and he specifies what are they.<sup>16</sup> In both versions the Buddha then suggests that one should, without quarrelling, dwelling in harmony and respect, understand the method explained (pariyāya-desite) in the teaching (dhamme), or the true meaning of the teaching (真實之義).<sup>17</sup>

On how many kinds of feelings are spoken of by the Buddha, the two versions of the discourse differ slightly, and only the SA version (SA 485) explains them.<sup>18</sup> The explanations lacking in SN 36. 19 (also SN 36. 20)<sup>19</sup> are to be found in SN 36. 22.<sup>20</sup> They can be summarised as follows:

---

15 SN iv, p. 223; T 2, p. 123c (CSA ii, p. 212).

16 SN iv, p. 224; T 2, p. 124a (CSA ii, p. 212).

17 SN iv, pp. 224-225; T 2, p. 124a (CSA ii, pp. 212-213).

18 SN iv, p. 224; T 2, p. 124a (CSA ii, p. 212).

19 SN iv, pp. 228-229 (no SA counterpart).

20 SN iv, pp. 231-232 (no SA counterpart).

One feeling:	The suffering of all feelings (all feelings are dukkha, 苦).
Two feelings:	Bodily and mental feelings.
Three feelings:	Pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings.
Four feelings (SA only):	Feeling with attachment (繫受) to the dhātu (realm) <sup>21</sup> of sensual desire (kāma-dhātu), to the dhātu of material form (rūpa-dhātu), and to the dhātu of non-material form (arūpa-dhātu); and feeling without attachment (不繫受).
Five feelings:	Feelings that are the faculties (indriyāni) of pleasure (sukha), pain (dukkha), joy (somanassa), grief (domanassa), and neutrality (upekkhā).
Six feelings:	Feeling born of eye-contact, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-, and mind-contact.
Eighteen feelings:	Six ways of giving attention (upavicāra) to joy, grief, and neutrality.
Thirty-six feelings:	Six forms of joy concerned with the worldly life (gehasita), and six concerned with renunciation (nekkhammasita); six forms of grief concerned with the worldly life, and six concerned with renunciation; six forms of neutrality concerned with the worldly life, and six concerned with renunciation.
108 feelings:	Thirty-six feelings of the past, of the future, and of present time.
Innumerable feelings (SA only):	Indefinite numbers of feelings with regard to this or that.

---

21 On this term, see Chapter 5.

To conclude, despite a few minor differences, no remarkable divergence is found between the two versions as regards the classification of feeling. The two share the following:

(1) The principal classification is into three kinds of feeling: pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings.

(2) Another major distinction is between two kinds of feeling: bodily feeling and mental feeling.

(3) In the untaught ordinary person pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral feelings evoke the reactions of desire, repulsion and ignorance respectively; these three reactions, implicitly equated with mental feeling, constitute bondage. In the well-taught noble disciple the three mental feelings do not arise in response to bodily feeling. Thus, the untaught ordinary person experiences both bodily feeling and mental feeling, while the well-taught noble disciple experiences only bodily feeling.

(4) The Buddha also classifies feeling according to three dhātus, six types of sense-contact, six ways of giving attention, two life-styles (worldly and renunciation), and three times.

(5) All feelings are suffering, because of the impermanent nature of compounded things.

## 2. Knowing things as they really are

As with the five aggregates (Chapter 2) and the six sense spheres (Chapter 3), the teachings on feeling emphasise “knowing things as they really are”. Both versions state that knowing feelings as they really are is an important practice in the noble life. For example, SN 36. 26 reports the Buddha as saying:<sup>22</sup>

Bhiksus, there are these three feelings. ... Bhiksus, whatsoever recluses or brahmins do not know (*nappajānanti*) as they really are (*yathābhūtam*), the arising (*samudayaṃ*), the ceasing (*atthagamaṃ*), the flavour (*assādaṃ*), the danger (*ādinavaṃ*), the giving up (*nissaraṇaṃ*) of these three feelings, [those recluses or brahmins are approved neither as recluses among recluses, nor as brahmins among brahmins, and those venerable ones in this present life do not abide

---

<sup>22</sup> SN iv, p. 234.