

# 20b

## Bhagavā Mūlaka Sutta

The “Rooted in the Blessed One” Discourse | A 10.58

Theme: The nature of all things (the Buddha)

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Dedicated to Dr Randolph LIM Kean Chin

### 1 Summary and significance

#### 1.1 SUMMARY

**The Bhagavā Mūlaka Sutta** (A 10.58) records the Buddha’s 10 questions attributed to “wanderers of other sects” that he asks the monks. The monks, not knowing their answers, invites the Buddha to teach them. The Buddha answers these 10 questions in terms of “all things” (*sabbe dhammā*), as he has done in the closely paralleled sectarian wanderers’ 9 questions, as recorded in **the Kim Mūlaka Sutta** (A 8.83).

#### 1.2 SIGNIFICANCE

##### 1.2.1 “All things” (*sabbe dhammā*)

**1.2.1.1** In an interesting way, this Sutta inspires us to investigate “what” (*kiṃ*) principles underlie the teaching of **the Sabba Sutta** (S 35.23)<sup>1</sup>; that is, in what teachings are they rooted (*mūlaka*). Firstly, we must have some understanding of a vitally important Pali word, **sabba**, “all,” which is, in fact, the essence of the Sabba Sutta.

The Sabba Sutta itself simply defines “**the all**” as the 6 internal sense-faculties and their respective external sense-objects. On closer examination, we understand the internal senses and the external senses as **name-and-form** (*nāma,rūpa*), which simply refers to the mind and its sense-data. Hence, we can also translate *dhamma* as “states,” since they specifically refer to the mind’s working.

**1.2.1.2 “Name”** refers to *all the 6 internal senses*, that is, each of our sense-faculties (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling and thinking): the sense and the *mind* or *consciousness* behind it. This is what the suttas often refer to as “the conscious body” (*sa,viññāṇaka,kāya*).<sup>2</sup> This shorthand may be elaborated as **perception** (*saññā*).

**The Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18) explains how perception arises, which then leads to mental proliferation. **Perception** (*saññā*) occurs for each of the sense-faculties in this manner. For example:

when **the eye** sees **form**, there arises  
the meeting of the 3 is  
with contact as condition, there is  
what one feels, one  
what one perceives, one  
what one thinks about, one

eye-consciousness  
contact  
feeling  
perceives  
thinks about  
mentally proliferates

cakkhu,viññāṇa  
*phassa*  
*vedanā*  
*sañjānāti*  
*vitakketi*  
*papañceti*

<sup>1</sup> S 35.23/4:15 (SD 7.1).

<sup>2</sup> SD 17.8a (12.3); SD 56.1 (4.3.2.2) n.

With **mental proliferation**, there arise conceptions (*saṅkhā*) and perceptions (*saññā*) regarding past, future and present **forms**.

The same occurs with the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.2.2 The root teachings (*mūlaka*)**

**1.2.2.1** All elements of our experience are rooted in desire (*chanda, mūlakā*) in the sense that we exist due to **desire** (taking *chanda* as equivalent to craving) [§5(1)]. They are born in our attention (*manasikāra, sambhavā*) in the sense that we only experience what we **attend** to. They arise from contact (*phassa, samudayā*) because without **contact** there is no experience at all. They converge upon feeling (*vedanā, samosaraṇā*) in the sense that **feeling** is the most important aspect of our experience, the basic motivating factor in everything we do.

**1.2.2.2** They are led by concentration (*samādhi-p, pamukhā*) in the sense that **concentration** is a controlling faculty (*indriya*) whose lead all elements of our experience must follow [§5(5)]. They are under the lordship of mindfulness (*satādhipeyyā*) because **mindfulness** is another controlling faculty which directs us in whatever we do or experience. All things have wisdom as supreme (*paññ'uttara*) because **wisdom** is the chief of the controlling faculties; wisdom, more than anything else, controls our experience (the last 3 factors are what allow us to get a sense of being in charge of our lives). That liberation is their essence or core (*vimutti, sāra*), the most excellent of all things, is self-explanatory.<sup>4</sup>

## **1.3 A COMPARISON OF THE 8, 9 AND 10 QUESTIONS**

**1.3.1 A comparative table of the 3 sets of questions:** see Table 1.3.

### **1.3.2 An analysis of the 3 sets of questions**

**1.3.2.1** (A) PHILOSOPHY AND ONTOLOGY. **The Kiṃ Mūlaka Sutta** (A 8.83) lists the 9 questions of the sectarian wanderers, whose teachings are at best speculative about religious philosophy about the nature of being and life (ontology), that is, the first 3 questions [1.3.1 (1-3)]. The answers are here given by the Buddha himself. The same questions and answers are given by the Buddha in **the Bhagavā Mūlaka Sutta** (A 10.58).<sup>5</sup>

In **the (Navaka) Samiddhi Sutta** (A 9.14), Sāriputta asks a different 1<sup>st</sup> question: “On what basis do intentions and thoughts arise in a person?” And Samiddhi answers that the basis is **name-and-form**. Sāriputta’s 2<sup>nd</sup> question is also different from the other 2 suttas: “Where do they become diversified?” “In connection with **the elements**,” answers Samiddhi.

The 1<sup>st</sup> question of A 8.83 and A 10.58 (both asked by the Buddha)—**In what are all things rooted?**—is answered with: “In desire (*chanda*).” The Buddha starts his question with the nature of being (ontology): all existence is rooted in desire, wanting or needing this or that. Sāriputta’s 1<sup>st</sup> question is on the nature of the mind (psychology); paraphrased, his question is “What does our mind experience? How does it experience so?” Answer: The mind experiences only “all things” (*sabba*) [1.2.1]. Rooted in desire, the mind arises as **name-and-form**, that is, the mind experiencing **the 4 elements**.<sup>6</sup> They are all referring to the same process.

<sup>3</sup> M 18,16 f/1:111 f (SD 6.14).

<sup>4</sup> Further see SD 32.10 (4). For similar explanations by Aj Brahmali, see A:Bo n 1801.

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed analysis on “desire” (*chanda*), see SD 32.10 (2.3 f).

<sup>6</sup> See SD 32.10 (1.3.1.2).

**TABLE 1.3 A comparison of the 8, 9 and 10 questions**

In this table, the 1<sup>st</sup> set lists the wanderers' 8 questions; the 2<sup>nd</sup> is Sāriputta's 9 questions that he asks Samiddhi; the 3<sup>rd</sup> is the Buddha's 10 questions. Identical questions are highlighted in **bold** or in **bold italics**. Items in **underscored italics** are unique to that list. Due to space constraints, some of the questions have been abridged.

**Kiṃ Mūlaka Sutta** (A 8.83): wanderers (SD 32.10)    **(Navaka) Samiddhi S** (A 9.14): Sāriputta (SD 57.20a)    **Bhagavā Mūlaka S** (A 10.58): the Buddha (SD 57.20b)

**A. EXPERIENCING TRUE REALITY** (philosophy; ontology) [1.3.2.1]

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| (1) in what are all things <b>rooted</b> ( <i>mūlaka</i> )?<br><i>desire</i>       | (1) <b><u>basis</u></b> ( <i>ārammaṇa</i> ) for <b><u>intentions + thoughts</u></b><br><b><u>name-and-form</u></b> | (1) in what are all things <b>rooted</b> ( <i>mūlaka</i> )?<br><i>desire</i>       |
| (2) in what are all things <b>born</b> ( <i>sambhava</i> )?<br><i>attention</i>    | (2) where they become <b><u>diversified</u></b> ( <i>nānatta</i> )?<br><b><u>the elements</u></b>                  | (2) in what are all things <b>born</b> ( <i>sambhava</i> )?<br><i>attention</i>    |
| (3) in what do all things <b>arise</b> ( <i>samudaya</i> )?<br><i>contact</i>      | (3) from what they <b>arise</b> ( <i>samudaya</i> )?<br><i>contact</i>   | (3) in what do all things <b>arise</b> ( <i>samudaya</i> )?<br><i>contact</i>      |
| (4) in what do all things <b>converge</b> ( <i>samosaraṇa</i> )?<br><i>feeling</i> | (4) in what they <b>converge</b> ( <i>samosaraṇa</i> )?<br><i>feeling</i>  | (4) in what do all things <b>converge</b> ( <i>samosaraṇa</i> )?<br><i>feeling</i> |

**B. LIMBS OF THE PATH** (psychology) [1.3.2.2]

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| (5) what is the <b>leader</b> ( <i>pamukha</i> ) of all things?<br><i>concentration</i> | (5) what is their <b>leader</b> ( <i>pamukha</i> )?<br><i>concentration</i>   | (5) what is the <b>leader</b> ( <i>pamukha</i> ) of all things?<br><i>concentration</i> |
| (6) what is the <b>lord</b> ( <i>ādhipateyya</i> ) of all things?<br><i>mindfulness</i> | (6) what <b>lords</b> ( <i>ādhipateyya</i> ) over them?<br><i>mindfulness</i> | (6) what is the <b>lord</b> ( <i>ādhipateyya</i> ) of all things?<br><i>mindfulness</i> |
| (7) what is <b>superior</b> ( <i>uttara</i> ) in all things?<br><i>wisdom</i>           | (7) what is <b>superior</b> ( <i>uttara</i> ) over them?<br><i>wisdom</i>     | (7) what is <b>superior</b> ( <i>uttara</i> ) in all things?<br><i>wisdom</i>           |

**C. THE FRUITION** (teleology) [1.3.2.3]

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| (8) what is the <b>essence</b> ( <i>sāra</i> ) of all things?<br><i>freedom</i> | (8) what is their <b>essence</b> ( <i>sāra</i> )?<br><i>freedom</i> | (8) what is the <b>essence</b> ( <i>sāra</i> ) of all things?<br><i>freedom</i> |
|---|---|---|

**D. THE GOAL (NIRVANA)** (soteriology) [1.3.2.4]

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| (9) in what is their <b>firm footing</b> ( <i>sāra</i> )?<br><i>the deathfree</i> | (9) what is the <b>firm footing</b> ( <i>ogadha</i> ) for all things?<br><i>the deathfree</i>        |
|   | (10) <b><u>the complete ending</u></b> ( <i>pariyosana</i> ) for all things<br><b><u>nirvana</u></b> |

“Name” (the mind) and “form” (what the mind experiences) occur as **contact** (*phassa*), sense-experience, explained as perception in **the Madhu,piṇḍika Sutta** (M 18) [1.2.1.2]. From contact or sense-experience, there is **feeling**, and so on [1.2.2].

**1.3.2.2 (B) PSYCHOLOGY.** In terms of the 4 noble truths, Part A (the 1<sup>st</sup> 4 questions of the 3 Suttas) represents the 1<sup>st</sup> two truths: suffering (“all things,” *sabba*) and its arising through craving (“desire,” *chanda*). This is **the meaning of life**, demonstrated in the process of dependent arising, beginning with ignorance (the other side of craving = desire), and ending with suffering (“all things”).

Based on this understanding, we can now see how Part B—concentration, mindfulness and wisdom—work as **the purpose of life**. The answer to question 5 is that **concentration** (*samādhi*) is the “leader” (*pamukha*) of “all things” and “the mind.” Concentration calms and clears the mind so that it is led away from greed, hate and delusion.

**Mindfulness** (*sati*) is our tool for mastering of body (the 4 elements), feelings, the mind and the realities that we experience, understanding which frees us from suffering; thus mindfulness, as a faculty (*indriya*), “lords” over the mind, balancing it between faith and wisdom, effort and concentration, so that the mind moves on an even keel like a safe boat over choppy waters into the safe harbour that is nirvana.

**Wisdom** frees us from the 3 unwholesome roots of greed, hate and delusion, freeing us from suffering. In this sense, it is always “superior” (*uttara*) to all things. With wisdom, we see all things for what they really are—impermanent, suffering and nonself—and so free oneself from being burdened by them on account of ignorance and craving. All this has to do with our mind-training; this is the essence of early Buddhist psychology.

**1.3.2.3 (C) TELEOLOGY.** **Teleology**, in the early Buddhist sense, refers to the purposes and ends of learning and practising the Dharma. A preliminary part of this vital stage in our Dharma life is (or should) already present in terms of moral virtue and mental cultivation (as mentioned in the preceding section). The 7<sup>th</sup> question is that of the “essence” (*sāra*) of “all things” and of “intentions and thinking.” *Sāra* also translates as “core,” as in the heartwood or hardwood of a tree-trunk that is useful in many ways.

The purpose of Dharma-training is famously declared by the Buddha to be that of gaining the “taste of the Dharma” (*dharmma,rasa*), that is, **the taste of freedom**, *vimutti,rasa*.<sup>7</sup> The Dharma may be seen as the 3 trainings. The training in moral virtue frees us from the burden of karmic suffering and festering guilt over bad done and good undone. This joy of **moral freedom** is a fertile ground for mental cultivation, which, in turn, frees us from wrong views, unwholesome tendencies, and promotes right views, wholesome habits: this promotes the joy and radiance of **mental freedom**.

The combined goodness of both moral virtue and mental cultivation is the rise of insight wisdom, which is the clear vision of true reality: this is **the spiritual wisdom** that brings us to the path of awakening as streamwinners, once-returners and non-returners. We are the true “learners” (*sekha*) of the path heading for awakening.

**1.3.2.4 (D) SOTERIOLOGY.** This 4<sup>th</sup> part—referring to the path and goal of awakening—is missing from the speculative views and philosophies of the wanderers, who are themselves unawakened. They do not even know what question to ask here. Sāriputta asks the 9<sup>th</sup> and last question: **Where does the mind find a truly firm footing?** (paraphrased). The Buddha asks the same question in a different way: **What is the firm footing for “all things”?**

<sup>7</sup> Pahārāda S (A 8.19,16) + SD 45.18 (2.6).

The interesting term “**firm footing**” (*o-gadha*)<sup>8</sup> comes from *ava* (“downwards”; *ava-* is shortened to *o-*) + *gādha*, from √GĀH, to plunge), referring to “a firm footing in water, firm ground (above water); a ford.” Metaphorically, it refers to a shallow spot in a river or stream where one can safely cross over. It also refers to any kind of shallow sandbank underwater on which one can stand safely above the water.

In a set of 7 famous parables of shipwreck victims in **the Udakūpama Sutta** (A 7.15), the 6<sup>th</sup>, a survivor, is said to be one “who, having emerged, gains firm ground (*paṭigadha-p.patta*).”<sup>9</sup> The prefix *paṭi-* (counter to, opposite) + *gadha* (same as *gādha* here), is a synonym of *ogadha*; but it refers to a non-returner, someone on the path (like the streamwinner and the once-returner), but not yet an arhat.

In a negative samsaric sense, “footing” can refer to any of **the 9 “abodes of being”** (*satta satt’āvāsa*), that is,

- (1) beings different in body and perception (the sense-world beings),
- (2) those different in body but same in perception (the 1<sup>st</sup>-dhyana realm brahmas),
- (3) those same in body but different in perception (the 2<sup>nd</sup>-dhyana realm beings, such as Ābhassara),
- (4) those same in body and perception (the 3<sup>rd</sup>-dhyana realm beings, such as Subha,kiṇha),
- (5) the 4<sup>th</sup>-dhyana realm brahmas;
- (6-9) the 4 formless-dhyana realm brahmas.<sup>10</sup>

Note that the pure abodes of the non-returners are not listed here because they are not samsaric realms but simply temporary “camping ground” (*khandha, vara-ṭ, thāna*) for the Buddha after his awakening, and for non-returners before attaining arhathood.<sup>11</sup> In other words, consciousness finds no footing there in terms of samsaric rebirth.

**1.3.2.5** In this closing section, we will examine the last 2 of the Buddha’s 10 questions: why is nirvana mentioned twice? Question 9 occurs in 2 ways: In what is the firm footing of the mind? What is the firm footing for all things? These questions ask the same thing, as we have noted about the overlapping senses of the key terms in **bold** [1.3.2.1]. The “firm footing” refers to that safe spot, the sandbank, the ford, the dry shore in the samsaric waters. The answer: **the deathfree** (*amata*), which refers to nirvana, where there is neither birth nor death, where samsara ends. The full answer is, in fact, “the firm footing in the deathfree” (*amat’ogadha*), a well known term found in many places in the Pali canon.<sup>12</sup> A similar term is *nibbān’ogadha*, “the deathfree that is nirvana.”<sup>13</sup>

The answer to question 9, “the deathfree” nirvana refers to the 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 kinds of nirvana, the one that an arhat attains upon awakening. This is called the “the nirvana-element with residue” (*sa, upādi, sesa nibbana, dhātu*). The “residue” is the 5 aggregates (without clinging)—the body, that is, the 5 senses (form) and mind (feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness) continue to function without creating new karma. Upon dying, the arhat is thus not reborn any more. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> kind of nirvana, which is the answer to question 10.

This 2<sup>nd</sup> kind of nirvana is also known as the “unestablished consciousness,” as mentioned in **the Godhika Sutta** (S 4.23), in reference to the final nirvana of the monk Godhika.<sup>14</sup> In the closing of **the Kevaḍ-**

<sup>8</sup> Its sense overlaps with *ogādha* (UA 2:343,15-24), meaning, “plunging into, immersion.” See DP: *ogadha*<sup>1</sup>; *ogadha*<sup>2</sup>; *ogādha*<sup>1</sup>, *ogādha*<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> A 7.15,8/4:12 = Pug 7.1/72,10 (SD 28.6); SD 8.6 (15.2.5.2).

<sup>10</sup> On 9 *satt’āvāsa*, see (**Navaka**) **Satt’āvāsa S** (A 9.24), SD 57.18; SD 23.14 (3), esp Table 3.

<sup>11</sup> See SD 23.14 (3.2.5).

<sup>12</sup> On *amat’ogadha*: M 2:196 = Sn 365; S 5:41,4, 54,28, 5:220,25 f, 232,21 f; A 5:107,10; Dh 411; Tha 168, 179; Vv 576; MA 3:439,15; ItA 1:112,11.

<sup>13</sup> On *nibbān’ogadha*: M 1:304,21; S 3:189, 5:218; A 2:26,11\*; It 28,16\*, 29; Vbh 426.

<sup>14</sup> S 4.23/1:122 (SD 61.16). See also SD 234.14 (4).

**ḍha Sutta** (D 11), the Buddha points out that this is what happens to the consciousness of a dead arhat: it is “unestablished” (*na gādhati*):<sup>15</sup>

**The consciousness** without attribute [non-manifesting],<sup>16</sup> without end, radiant all around<sup>17</sup>—

It is here that earth, water, fire and wind find no footing;  
 here, long and short, small and great, fair and foul;  
 here, name and form cease without a trace:  
 with consciousness’ cessation this stops here.”<sup>18</sup> (D 11,85.4/1:223), SD 1.7

## 2 Related suttas

### 2.1 Pali suttas

The following suttas are closely connected with **the Bhagavā Mūlaka Sutta** (A 10.58), SD 57.20b, which are extended versions and close parallels of these 2 titles:

**(Aṭṭhaka) Mūlaka Sutta** (A 8.83/4:338 f), SD 32.10

It has 8 questions concerning “all things” (*sabbe dhammā*), but A 10.58 has 2 additional items.

**(Navaka) Samiddhi Sutta** (A 9.14/4:385 f), SD 57.20a

It has 9 questions in terms of “intentions and thoughts” (*saṅkappa, vitakka*), instead of “all things” (*sabbe dhammā*).<sup>19</sup>

### 2.2 Chinese parallel

**The Bhagavā Mūlaka Sutta** (A 10.58) has a Chinese parallel in **MĀ 113**,<sup>20</sup> 諸法本經 *zhū fǎ běn jīng*, the discourse of the roots of all things, which says thus:

<sup>15</sup> On the unestablished consciousness, see SD 23.14 (4).

<sup>16</sup> “Without attribute [signless],” *anidassana*, “invisible.” Nāṇananda renders it as “non-manifesting” (*Concept and Reality in Early Buddhist Thought*, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1971:59). See Bodhi’s important n at M:ÑB 1249 n513. See also Thanissaro’s nn: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.11.0.than.html> & <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.049.than.html>.

<sup>17</sup> “Radiant all around,” *sabbato, pabhaṃ*, where *pabhaṃ*, vl *pahaṃ*. Nāṇamoli, in his *Majjhima tr*, takes *pabhaṃ* to be the negative present participle of *pabhavati* (“to be able”)—*apabhaṃ*—the negative-prefix *a* elided in conjunction with *sabbato*: “The sense can be paraphrased freely by ‘not predicating being in relation to “all,”’ or ‘not assuming of “all” that it is or is not in an absolute sense’” (M:ÑB 1249 n513). But, argues Bodhi. “if we take *pabhaṃ* as ‘luminous,’ which seems better justified, the [Majjhima] verse links up with the idea of the mind as being intrinsically luminous [A 1:10]” (id). See D:W 557 n241. Cf A 1.10 (SD 8.3) where the mind is said to by nature radiant (*pabhassara*) & A 2:139 where the light of wisdom (*paññā, pabha*) is called the best of lights. See Bodhi’s important n at M:ÑB 1249 n513. See also Sue Hamilton, *Identity and Experience*, 1996:100 f. On the radiant mind, see also SD 54.2a (4.3.3).

<sup>18</sup> The Buddha makes a similar statement by way of an inspired utterance (*udāna*) on the parinirvana of **Bāhiya Dāru, cīriya** (U 1.10): “Where water, earth, fire and wind find no footing, | There neither brightness burns nor sun shines | There neither moon gleams nor darkness reigns. | When a sage, a brahmin, through wisdom has known this by himself. | Then, he is freed from form and formless, from joy and pain.” (U 1.10/9,4-8), SD 33.7. A similar verse is found at **S 1.27**/1:15,18\*, SD 50.13(2), and a similar teaching is given by Mahā Cunda to Channa (S 35.87/-4:59), SD 11.12. The brahma Ghāṭikāra says something similar (S 1.50/1:35,19\* = 2.24/2:60,17\*). On this verse [D 11,85], see D:W 557 n242 & **Mahā Parinibbāna S**, SD 9 (9.8.6). For further modern comy, see also SD 54.2b (2.2.2).

<sup>19</sup> See SD 96.2 (1.2.2).

<sup>20</sup> The full ref is **MĀ 113** (T1.602c1-603a.02).

**T1.602c1-16:**

(1) 欲爲諸法本	<i>yù wéi zhū fǎ běn</i>	desire is the root of all things;
(2) 更樂爲諸法和	<i>gèng lè wéi zhū fǎ hé</i>	greater happiness is the convergence of all things;
(3) 覺爲諸法來	<i>jué wéi zhū fǎ lái</i>	all things arise from feelings;
(4) 思想爲諸法有	<i>sī xiǎng wéi zhū fǎ yǒu</i>	all things born from thoughts;
(5) 念爲諸法上主	<i>niàn wéi zhū fǎ shàng zhǔ</i>	mindfulness is the supreme master of all things;
(6) 定爲諸法前	<i>dìng wéi zhū fǎ qián</i>	concentration comes before all things;
(7) 慧爲諸法上	<i>huì wéi zhū fǎ shàng</i>	wisdom is foremost of all things;
(8) 解脫爲諸法真	<i>jiě tuō wéi zhū fǎ zhēn</i>	freedom is the essence of all things;
(9) 涅槃爲諸法訖	<i>nièpán wéi zhū fǎ qì</i>	nirvana is the end of all things.

However, MĀ 113, then, continues with a passage (T1.602c17-29) from the next sutta in the same Sacitta Vagga, **the (Dasaka) Pabbajjā Sutta** (A 10.59), which closes by assuring the monk of either arhathood or non-returning; but MĀ 113 then, in effect, states that the monk will surely gain arhathood:

**T1.602c28-29:**

是謂比丘斷愛除結。正知正觀諸法已。便得苦邊。

*Shì wèi bīqīū duàn ài chú jié. Zhèng zhī zhèng guān zhū fǎ yǐ. Biàn dé kǔ biān.*

It is said that a monk who has cut off craving gets rid of the fetters; having rightly known and rightly seen all things, comes to suffering's end.

The Chinese parallel, thus, conflates the 2 suttas (A 10.58+59).

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## Bhagavā Mūlaka Sutta

### The “Rooted in the Blessed One” Discourse

A 10.58

At Sāvattihī.

1 “If, bhikshus, wanderers of other sects were to ask you thus:

(1) In what are all things [states] rooted, avuso?	<i>kiṃ mūlakā, āvuso,</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(2) In what are all things born [produced]?	<i>kiṃ sambhavā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(3) In what do all things arise?	<i>kiṃ samudayā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(4) In what do all things converge?	<i>kiṃ samosaraṇā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(5) What is the leader of all things?	<i>kiṃ pamukhā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(6) What is the (supreme) lord of all things?	<i>kiṃ adhipateyyā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(7) What is superior in all things?	<i>kiṃ uttarā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(8) What is the essence of all things?	<i>kiṃ sārā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(9) What is the firm footing for all things?	<i>kiṃ ogadhā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā,</i>
(10) What is the complete ending for all things?	<i>kiṃ pariyosānā</i>	<i>sabbe dhammā ti,</i>

When asked thus, bhikshus, by the wanderers of other sects, how should you answer?”

2 “Bhante, our teachings are rooted in the Blessed One, guided by the Blessed One, has the Blessed One as refuge. It would be good indeed if the Blessed One were to explain its meaning. Having heard the Blessed One, the monks would remember it.”<sup>21</sup>

3 “In that case, bhikshus, listen, pay careful attention, I will speak.  
“Yes, bhante,” the monks answered the Blessed One in assent.

4 The Blessed One said this:

“If, bhikshus, the wanderers of other sects were to ask you thus:

- (1) *In what are all things [states] rooted?*
- (2) *In what are all things born?*
- (3) *In what do all things arise?*
- (4) *In what do all things converge? [107]*
- (5) *What is the leader of all things?*
- (6) *What is the lord of all things?*
- (7) *What is superior in all things?*
- (8) *What is the essence [the heart] of all things?*
- (9) *What is the firm footing for all things?*
- (10) *What is the complete ending for all things?*

5 When you are asked thus, bhikshus, by wanderers of other sects, you should answer them thus:

(1) All things are	rooted in <u>desire</u> .	<i>chanda,mūlakā, āvuso, sabbe dhammā</i>
(2) All things are	born in <u>attention</u> .	<i>manasikāra,sambhavā sabbe dhammā</i>
(3) All things	arise through <u>contact</u> .	<i>phassa,samudayā sabbe dhammā</i>
(4) All things	converge in <u>feeling</u> .	<i>vedanā,samosaraṇā sabbe dhammā</i>
(5) All things have	<u>concentration</u> as their leader.	<i>samādhi-p,pamukhā sabbe dhammā</i>
(6) All things have	<u>mindfulness</u> as their lord.	<i>sat’ādhipeyyā sabbe dhammā</i>
(7) In all things,	<u>wisdom</u> is <u>superior</u> .	<i>paññ’uttarā sabbe dhammā</i>
(8) Of all things,	<u>freedom</u> is the essence.	<i>vimutti,sārā sabbe dhammā</i>
(9) All things find	<u>a firm footing in the deathfree</u> . <sup>22</sup>	<i>amat’ogadhā sabbe dhammā</i>
(10) All things find	<u>complete</u> ending in <u>nirvana</u> .	<i>nibbāna,pariyosānā sabbe dhammāti</i>

When you are asked thus, bhikshus, by wanderers of other sects, this is how you should answer them.

— evaṃ —

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<sup>21</sup> *Bhagavaṃ mūlakā no bhante dhammā, bhagavaṃ nettikā, bhagavaṃ paṭisaraṇā. Sādhu vata bhante bhagavantaṃ yeva paṭibhātu etassa bhāsitaṃ attho. Bhagavato sutvā bhikkhū dhāressantīti.* This is stock: **Mahā Dhamma,samādāna S** (M 46,2/1:309 f), SD 59.11; **Vīmaṃsaka S** (M 47,3/1:317), SD 35.6; **Naḷakapāna S** (M 68,8/1:465), SD 37.4; **Mahā Suññata S** (M 122,19/3:115), SD 11.4; **Bālena Paṇḍita S** (S 2:24), SD 21.1, **Parivīmaṃsanā S** (S 12.51-/2:81), SD 11.5, **Candūpama S** (S 16.3/2:199), SD 38.2; **Sammā,sambuddha S** (S 22.58/3:66), SD 49.10; **Sall’atthana S** (S 36.6/4:208), SD 5.5, **Ānanda S 2** (S 36.16/4:221); **(Tika) Añña Titthiyā S** (A 3.68/1:199), SD 16.4; **Loka,dhamma S** (A 8.6/4:158), SD 48.3; **Kiṃ Mūlaka S** (A 8.83/4:338), SD 32.10; **Sambodhi Pakkhika Dhamma S** (A 9.1/4:351), SD 82.1; **Bhagavā Mūlaka S** (A 10.58/5:106,21-24), SD 57.20; **(Ekādasaka) Samādhi S 2** (A 11.20/5:355).

<sup>22</sup> *Amat’ogadha* here and *nibbana,pariyosānā* are near-synonymous; their only difference is in their timing. The 1<sup>st</sup> sentence—the “deathfree”—refers to the 1<sup>st</sup> attaining of nirvana, ie, the nirvana-element with the aggregates remaining (*sa,upādi,sesa nibbāna,dhātu*); the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence. the final nirvana, when the arhat dies, ie, the nirvana-element without remains (*anupādi,sesa nibbana,dhātu*): **Nibbāna,dhatu S** (It 44), SD 50.13.