

Dependent Origination: Eight Conditions

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In the late 80s and early 90s, until his health deteriorated too much, Ajahn Buddhādāsa gave regular lectures during the monthly international retreats held at Suan Mokkh and then Suan Mokkh International Dharma Hermitage. Usually, Ajahn spoke in Thai and Santikaro Bhikkhu interpreted into English live. Audio recordings are now available from www.suanmokkh.org and www.bia.or.th. The following is a transcription generously made by a Dhamma volunteer. If you noticed possible improvements to the text and would like to contribute, please kindly contact the Buddhādāsa Indapañño Archives in Bangkok (suanmokkhbkk@gmail.com).

As we said yesterday today we will speak about *paṭiccasamuppāda* or ‘dependent origination.’ If we see or if we realize dependent origination then we see the Buddha – or we see Buddhism in its true essential form. So please listen carefully. Please give this very important subject your undivided attention.

Although it may be a little cumbersome or difficult for you at first, please try and learn this Pāli word because it’s so important. The word is *paṭiccasamuppāda*. In Thai the pronunciation is a little shorter, *patitchasamupabat* but in the Pāli it is more like *paṭiccasamuppāda*. Please try and remember this word if you can. But in fact there are actually two words that are discussing the same fact or reality. In cases where we are talking about everything in this universe then we can use another word, *idappaccayatā*. Which is the same basic law but when it is applied to every thing both within human lives and every thing in the physical mental world around us. But when we speak specifically about the reality inside our minds, especially the arising of suffering and the falling away or the quenching of suffering then we call that specifically *paṭiccasamuppāda*. If you can, try and remember these two words. One, *idappaccayatā*, is the more general one for all things physical and mental, and *paṭiccasamuppāda* is specifically the reality within human experience, within human minds.

But even in Buddhist countries like Thailand these two are confused. Sometimes they’re used inappropriately and the meanings are switched

inadvertently or because people are confused. So we need to be careful to get the meanings straight, so we use these two words correctly.

Paṭiccasamuppāda means ‘dependently arising,’ or ‘dependently originating’; that things arise dependent on other things, or on other factors. *Idappaccayatā* means ‘with this as the condition this arises, or this happens’; because this is the condition or cause this occurs, this exists, this happens.

When you’re still studying *paṭiccasamuppāda*, still trying to understand it and haven’t fully realized yet, then it will be a philosophy for you, it will be theory. But when you’ve seen this thoroughly, experienced it for yourself it will become a science.

Therefore at first you must study it in a logical, rational, intellectual way until you’re able to see it directly for yourself. And then it will naturally become a scientific, empirical, experimental kind of knowledge coming from your experience.

Now *paṭiccasamuppāda* is the heart of the Buddha’s teaching which the Buddha himself said is the only thing he actually teaches. One time the Buddha said, “In the past as well as now I teach only *dukkha* and the final quenching of *dukkha*, other things I don’t talk about.” This points to the centrality of *paṭiccasamuppāda*, because *paṭiccasamuppāda* is just the explanation of how *dukkha* (suffering, pain) arises and how *dukkha* is finally quenched. The Buddha didn’t talk about anything else beside this.

But then there are many dozens, hundreds and even thousands of associated matters, things which are connected with this. But if it’s the Buddhist teaching, if it is really coming from the Buddha’s understanding, then it all connects up with *paṭiccasamuppāda*, it all relates to it.

Another thing that makes it difficult for some people to study this, is that the later commentators on the Buddha – the people who 500, 1,000 years after the Buddha wrote books explaining his teaching – have explained *paṭiccasamuppāda* incorrectly. For example some of them have turned it into a matter of incarnation and re-incarnation, which has nothing to do with the Buddha’s teaching. There is nowhere that the Buddha taught incarnation or reincarnation. But some of the commentators have confused *paṭiccasamuppāda* to the extent that they turned it into a non-Buddhist teaching. So we point this out so that you will be careful in the future as you read different things about dependent origination.

We would like you to understand that in Buddhism there is really only one matter, there is really only one issue and that is dependent origination, *paṭiccasamuppāda*. Everything else are various accessory teachings, or support teachings, or various connected associated things which sometimes can become excessive and people can get carried away with the non-essential matters. It's important to realize that *paṭiccasamuppāda* is the essence of the whole thing so that we can keep our focus and not waste time on things that are of lesser importance or not be distracted.

Using the word *idappaccayatā*, try to study the fact of the universe that: because of this, this arises; because this exists, this exists; or because this ceases, this ceases. Study this fact of all nature using this word *idappaccayatā* which means 'because this exists, this exists' or 'because of this, this.' And then use the word *paṭiccasamuppāda* to study the same fact, the same reality of nature that depending on these conditions, this originates – the originating, the arising that occurs dependent on other things. It's really the same matter there's just these two slightly different words. We can use them to explore the reality of this world and of our own lives until we see it thoroughly.

We can speak about *paṭiccasamuppāda* in many stages of conditioned arising or we can speak of it in terms of just one stage. For example the Buddha once said, "If the rain is good, the crops in the field will be good; if the rain isn't good, the crops in the field won't be good." Just that much is dependent origination, *idappaccayatā* – just this one stage.

For example, if you want to teach this to your children you can point out to them that because there is sunlight water on the earth evaporates.

Because the water evaporates, then clouds form in the sky. Then when there are clouds and they become heavy enough and cool enough, the rain will fall. Because the rain falls, the earth is wet. Because the earth or the soil is wet, it becomes slippery. Because the earth is slippery, you fall down. And because you fell down, your head cracked open and you started to bleed. Because you cracked your head open, you have to go to the hospital and this provides work for the doctors. And then the doctor takes care of you, and you get better. Although this a rather crude, a very simple example, this is one hundred percent *paṭiccasamuppāda*. This has all the characteristics of *paṭiccasamuppāda*. It's only in a very easy external form that even children can understand.

Because there are many different kinds of physical elements in this world

there are cells – the elements have combined and formed into what we call ‘cells.’ When there are cells they come together, colonize and then eventually they form these bodies with muscles, bone structures, and everything. When there is a flesh body with everything, then there develops a nervous system. When there is a nervous system, then there is contact or interaction with the external world. When there is this contact or interaction, there is feeling. When there are these feelings, there arise a sense of positive & negative. When we like the feeling, it’s ‘positive’ and when don’t like it, it becomes ‘negative.’ And then we foolishly go and like the positive and hate the negative, we become stupid in this way. And when we begin to think in this way, then there arises the egoistic concept of ‘I like’ or ‘I hate.’ Then when there arises this ego that loves or the ego that hates, it bites us. This loving & hating ego bites us and there is *dukkha*, there is inner pain, there is mental misery. If there is no ego, then there is no *dukkha*, no suffering. And this understanding of paṭiccasamuppāda will tell us that, in fact, there is no ego, that ego is just an illusion, that it actually doesn’t exist anywhere. And it will show that there isn’t really any positive or negative. That both positive & negative are conditionally caused, they arise in this dependently originating way and don’t actually exist of themselves. But when there isn’t any positive & negative then we don’t have any problems, we are free of all troubles, but because we stupidly become engrossed and infatuated in the positive & the negative then we create all kinds of problems for ourselves.

If you can study this business of dependent origination and then be able to control it, if you can manage it, then you will be above all the power and influence of positive & negative.

And then there won’t be anything that can make us laugh or make us cry, and we won’t have to be sad or glad ever again.

This means to be free of the power of positive & negative, which is the meaning of liberation. Liberation, or emancipation, or salvation in whatever spiritual situation or even political, or whatever, means really this: to be saved from, to be emancipated from this tyranny of the positive & the negative.

All religions aim for salvation. But the different religions have their various understandings and explain ‘salvation’ in different ways. But in Buddhism this is the meaning of salvation: to be free from, to beyond all power and influence of the positive & negative. In Buddhism this is the meaning of salvation.

But just about everybody in the world loves gladness. People like to be glad,

they really search for gladness, they fall in love with it, they become enslaved to gladness. And so very few people are interested in being free from gladness.

How good can it be? Or how positive can it be? Or how happy can it be? When we get infatuated with gladness and get stuck in it, and are trapped by it, and then never can be free, can be liberated, because we're stuck in gladness.

Everybody still prefers gladness. Everybody around you is still very interested in being glad – including you yourself. Take a look around and see this, that even yourself isn't yet liberated because you still attach to gladness, and as long as this continues we'll never be free.

When you're glad about something, when something is making you laugh, take a look at that. You see how it makes tired. You see how it wears you out. Can you see the difficulties that come from this gladness? If you see this, then you see that gladness isn't really worth the trouble. If you can see how it tires us and wastes our energy and disturbs the mind. But until we see this we will still be clinging to the positive and still getting caught up in the positive. It's important to look at what gladness actually does.

For example, sometimes when we're really happy or really glad we have trouble even breathing. Our breathing can't keep up with our gladness and excitement. Or sometimes we're so glad, we feel so happy that we can't even sleep at night. Or there are times when we don't feel like eating, we're so happy about something we don't feel like eating, or the food doesn't even taste good. This shows how abnormal this gladness is, how it disturbs the organism, it disturbs us and interferes with a peaceful life.

Gladness & sadness are never peaceful, they are always the enemies of peace. So we need to climb up above them in order to be beyond gladness & sadness. It's hard to describe what it is to be above these things, so the best we can do is maybe to be beyond gladness & sadness.

In Buddhism we have a word for this being beyond gladness & sadness. We call it 'the void,' or we call it 'voidness.' Many of you won't like this word. Quite a few people don't like this word and think that we're crazy for talking about the void, or voidness – in fact it frightens many people. But in Buddhism this is the word we use to talk about this being beyond gladness & sadness.

But if we tell you that this means being void of all problems, of being void or empty of all suffering, misery, and trouble, then you might get interested in

this.

We call this *suññatā*, which means ‘voidness’ or the state that is void of all problems, of all suffering, of all *dukkha*.

From evil we raise ourselves up to the good. And then we go beyond the good to the void. Void is that which is beyond all evil & good. From *dukkha* we find *sukha* (happiness) and then beyond happiness, there is the void. Or we free ourselves from the negative and move to the positive, and then go beyond the positive to the void that is beyond all positive & negative.

Those of you who have been good Christians will be familiar with the story in the second chapter of Genesis where God forbid Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This knowledge of good & evil is God’s warning and it’s the same teaching that in Buddhism we call voidness. God said that if you eat this fruit, you will die. In Buddhism we say that if you’re beyond good & evil, then you won’t have any problems, you won’t have any troubles. What we are saying here is the same thing that God was teaching in the second chapter of Genesis.

So we hope that you understand that even in Christianity there’s the need for the voidness. And if you’re united with the void, then you’re united with God.

And Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism, taught that we should be beyond *yin* & *yang*, which is the same thing as the voidness. Yin & yang are the dualities like good & evil, and to be beyond all that is the voidness. So even in Taoism we find the same thing.

In Hinduism the teaching is very similar though it differs a little bit at the end. In Hinduism they teach to beyond *puñña*, which is ‘merit’ or ‘goodness’ and *pāpa*, which is ‘sin’ or ‘evil.’ To be beyond *puñña* & *pāpa* is in Buddhism voidness, but there they call it ‘to be with Paramatman.’

In Buddhism the teaching is to be beyond good & evil, to be beyond sin & virtue, to be beyond unwholesomeness & wholesomeness, to transcend all the pairs of opposites. All these dualities in Buddhism should be transcended, we should go beyond them.

This is the only way to find freedom or liberation. But for us we are still trapped within the power and influence of all these dualities. We laugh. We cry. We’re sad. We’re glad. Our lives just keep bouncing back and forth between these different extremes; and so we’re not free, we’re not yet emancipated, we

haven't realized this higher truth of the reality of voidness.

And you should know now that only *paṭiccasamuppāda* can lead us to the voidness

If we talk about this reality of voidness in a slightly different way, if we speak about the result that comes when the mind is united with voidness then we use the word *atammayatā*, which we translate as 'unconcoctability.' This is the state where the mind is unconcocted. Instead of being stirred up, cooked up, messed up by things the mind is free of all that churning and cooking and conditioning. This unaffectedness we call *atammayatā* (unconcoctability).

You can compare *atammayatā* with unshakeability. The mind that has *atammayatā* doesn't shake or tremble. The mountains in the Himalayas, or the Alps in Europe, or the Rockies in North America, even these huge massive mountains can shake and tremble if there is an earthquake. But the mind that is *atammayatā* won't shake, or tremble, or quiver even the least little bit.

An even simpler and more direct example is a single young woman who is very beautiful, very attractive, and very desirable, no matter what man came by, no matter how rich, charming and intelligent, or how nice his clothes were, or how good his tastes, or whatever, no matter what wonderful qualities this man would have, if this young woman had *atammayatā* there is no way this guy could pick her up or take advantage of her in any way, if she has *atammayatā*.

Or on the other hand, a very handsome young man could be sitting there and a whole herd of Miss Universes and Miss Worlds and all these beauty queens could come by and he wouldn't be effected at all, if he had *atammayatā*.

This is the benefit of the void, to be out from under the influence of the positive & the negative.

So now, or next, we should study how *paṭiccasamuppāda* can lead us or bring us to voidness.

First, you should understand what we call the stream of *idappaccayatā*, or the stream of *paṭiccasamuppāda*, that: because of this, there occurs this; and because of that, then this and this, and then this. So there this stream of things arising dependent on each other, conditioned by previous things. To see this flow of things arising out of conditions, out of causes, is something we should see.

Right now, how do you see things in this world? Do you see everything as a stream, as a flow? Or do you see things as solid objects? That this is one hunk of a thing, and there is another chunk, and there's another chunk and we see these separate individual objects. How do we see it? How do we see the ground here? Do we see it as a flow, as a constantly changing process, or do we see it as something solid and permanent, as an object or thing? If we can see everything as this constantly changing flow, then our minds will be free and will be in the voidness. But if we're still grabbing onto things, taking everything to be solid stable objects, then we can be trapped by them.

Or we can look in it ourselves, we can pay attention to our own bodies and see how all the time we're breathing and we're eating food and things. So constantly there is change going on and interchange between our cells and then between our body and the outside world. So things are constantly changing, nothing stays the same, there is a constant flow or process, a stream of conditionality that is constantly flowing. There is not just one set body, it's not a set thing. There are no real boundaries that can be defined as a thing, there is just flow or change. If we look inside ourselves we can see this; we can experience our own selves as this flow.

There was a Greek philosopher at the same time as the Buddha named Heraclitus, who taught that "everything flows" or "all is flux" – in Greek *panta rhei*. Many people thought he was crazy. They probably couldn't understand how it was that everything is in a state of flux, how everything is flowing. But if we understand *paṭiccasamuppāda* we'll see that in fact everything is in a state of flux, of change.

If we look inside, if we really pay attention and experience our own bodies, we can start to feel the constant change that is taking place. But it's not just the breathing, or it's not just the blood flowing through the body, everything is changing. Every cell in our body is constantly changing. There are mutations going on all the time. Things are constantly changing. And in every atom that makes up these cells, in all the atoms there is this flow, there is this constant process of change. There is nothing that stands still. There is nothing that doesn't move or change in the various different ways. We can see in everything, in the body, that there is a constant flow or stream of change. This happens because there are causes and conditions for change, there are always causes and conditions bringing about change. And this points us to the law of *idappaccayatā* (the law of conditionality): that everything exists in a

conditioned, that everything is conditioned, and these conditions necessitate constant change. If we see this it will be impossible for us to concoct or create an egoist concept. Not seeing this constant flow of change we take ourselves to be a 'self,' to be an ego, but when we see the flow of idappaccayatā it will be impossible for the egoist concept to arise, and when there is no egoistic concept we don't make any problems, there is no suffering or misery.

In every atom that makes up our body and our world there is constant motion. Everything is spinning, electrons are dancing all over the place, things are pulsing and changing. This is going on constantly and there is absolutely no stop to it. And then our universe, everything in the universe is made up of these atoms. So it is quite obvious that everything is constantly flowing, is in this constant process of transformation. To see this is the essence of seeing idappaccayatā.

So material things out around us are full of these constantly flowing and streaming atoms, and then inside us all the cells are like this. And then mental things such as our thoughts, there are also in the state of flow or process. Have you ever observed a thought? It never stands still. In fact our thoughts are changing even more quickly than material things. The thoughts are just there for an instant. And all our mental experience is this flow of change; this conditioned process is what makes up our mental experience. So everything within us, whether our physical bodies or our minds, our thoughts, our feelings, as well as the world around us – the rocks, the trees, the animals, the cats, the cars and everything – is this constantly flowing change. Everything without any exception is in this flow, this process. If we see everything as flowing like this, if we see this ceaseless limitless flowing then our minds will be free.

But still, all these things that are constantly flowing we still fall in love with them. Take a good look at that. Is it good or is it crazy? To fall in love with things that are flowing all the time, is it good or is it insane?

That we hate the negative and fall in love with the positive, is this crazy or is it good?

And it's only an understanding of paṭiccasamuppāda that will help us to not fall into love with the positive & into hatred of the negative.

So we ought to study this matter of dependent origination until it is able to free us. So now let's look at it itself. We've been talking about it in a general way. Let's look at dependent origination in more detail. We'll begin with a very

simple example, one that has nine stages or nine aspects. It begins when the eye interacts with some physical object in the world, with some visual object. When the eye and a visual object interact, there arises what we call ‘eye consciousness’ which is the mind being conscious of the object via the eye. This is already paṭiccasamuppāda. We have the eye and the visual object, they interact through light waves and chemical reactions in the eye, and then there arises eye consciousness.

It works the same for the ear and sounds. When they interact there is what we call ‘ear consciousness’ – knowing the sound. Or with the nose and odors, then there arises nose consciousness – to be conscious of the smell. Then there is the body, the skin feeling touches and pressures and things and then arises skin or body consciousness. And even for the mind, when the mind experiences an emotion, a mood, a memory, or something then there arises mind consciousness. So this has the condition of idappaccayatā or paṭiccasamuppāda. There are causes and then there arises a result.

Then we come to the second stage. When there is the eye, the visual object, and eye consciousness, when these three work together, when they function as a unit, as a team then there arises what we call ‘contact.’ Where the experience makes full contact or has full impact on consciousness, on the mind.

This contact is crucial because based on this contact, there arises feeling. Due to contact there arises feeling, which is the third stage of paṭiccasamuppāda.

These feelings are what we take to be ‘positive’ & ‘negative.’ These feelings are what lead us to falling into positiveness & negativeness. And so due to the feelings there arises *taṇhā* – which is a stupid foolish wanting, or what we call ‘desire,’ to want things in a blind and foolish way. This arises because of the feelings (*vedanā*). This arising of *taṇhā* is the fourth stage.

Now be very careful, when we talk about *taṇhā* or ‘desire’ it must be foolish, blind, ignorant. This is only the desire that occurs when there is a lack of understanding and wisdom. If there is awareness and wisdom we give it a different name. We call it *saṅkappa* (aspiration) – or we could call it ‘wise want.’ But here what we are specifically talking about is a foolish ignorant desire or craving that follows after this feeling of positive & negative. When things are taken to be positive & negative, which is already foolish, then there becomes this ignorant desire that is chasing after or running away from the

positive & negative. Now *taṇhā* leads to *upādāna*, leads to the feeling that there is the one who desires, the desirer, or the liker, the hater, the lover. Whenever there is some kind of desire, there arises a concept of the ego that desires, the ‘self’ that desires, and we call this *upādāna* (attachment). This egoist concept is the result of this ignorant desire.

If you understand this point, this fact right here where *upādāna* arises from *taṇhā*, from ignorant want, then you’ll see how the ego, the ‘self,’ the ‘soul,’ is just an illusion. You’ll see that it is just a concept created. When there is desire, when there is this kind of twisted energy in the mind of desire then it kind of forms a knot and we cling to that as the desirer, the wanter, the lover, the hater, the whatever form the desire takes. But when we see that this concept of ego is just a concept, it’s just a concept conditioned by desire, that when there is no desire the concept of ‘self,’ of ego, doesn’t arise, then we see the illusiveness, we see the falseness of the ego. We see that it’s just a concept. If we can see this then we can be free of the tyranny, of the confusion and chaos of ego and self.

This *upādāna* (attachment to the concept of ‘I’), this is just an ignorant concept, this is just ignorance. But it’s like the conception of the ego, the way there is physical conception in a womb, this is a mental or spiritual conception of the ego. And then once the ego is conceived – attachment to this conception of ego – then the ego grows. And when the ego is fully-formed in the mind, we call that *bhava*. This is the fully-formed ego, the ego that is fully pregnant and ready to be born. This is the next stage of dependent origination.

When the ego is fully pregnant, is fully matured, then it’s born, and we call this *jāti* (birth). *Jāti* is the birth of the fully mature ego. And once it is born then the ego plays its games in the world. It has some role, it falls into some situation, and this we call ‘birth.’ Once the ego has fully formed it is born into some role, it plays a certain game, this is called ‘the birth of ego’ which is the next stage of *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

Once there is this ego birth then ‘I’ and ‘mine’ is fully developed. These concepts of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ are fully formed. And then there is ‘I,’ there’s ‘mine,’ there’s ‘he,’ there’s ‘she,’ there’s ‘you.’ And this is the foundation for all our problems in the world, all our problems in life. All suffering, all troubles, need something to stand on. They don’t just arise out of thin air. All problems, all suffering, all pain and misery is based in this ego. And so for there to be pain and suffering there must be this birth of ego. This is the next stage of *paṭiccasamuppāda*. When the ego is born, then there arises all the problems and

trouble which we call *dukkha*, all the misery and dissatisfaction that we call *dukkha*.

We call this ‘spiritual birth.’ This birth of ego we call ‘spiritual birth.’ Can you see how often this happens? Many of us think of birth as happening only once in a life time, but this spiritual birth is happening many times even in one day. It happens so often that you can’t even count it. Even in one hour this ego is being born, his egoist concept is born many many times even in just one hour.

Physical birth is not a problem in any way. To be physically born is just like being a rock or something and there is no problem. The problem is when there is spiritual birth within this physical birth. The physical birth itself, there is nothing wrong with it. It’s when there is spiritual birth that all problems, all troubles, all suffering can occur. So when an infant is born there is no problem, there is no suffering. It’s not until that the infant’s ego is born, when there is spiritual birth that the child suffers, that there is any trouble. So we don’t have to worry about physical birth; that’s not our problem. The whole thing is understanding and getting free of spiritual birth, of this illusion of ‘ego.’

Once the child is born and the body begins to mature the child uses its eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin in order to experience the world, and once this sense activity starts to take place then the child starts to react and feel positive & negative, and then spiritual birth takes place. Once the senses start to function then there can be spiritual birth and then the child begins to suffer.

Whenever there is a feeling or sense of positive & negative then we have a problem and this causes this spiritual birth. When we feel it is positive or negative then this is where all our problems arise, because from that follows the birth of ego and all of our problems.

We live in a world that is full of objects that are giving us pleasant and unpleasant feelings. And we are constantly taking these to be positive & negative and so we create many problems out of our lives and within this world. And then from these problems this is for us *dukkha*, this is suffering and misery. Without any exceptions. Every time that there arises a feeling of positive or negative ego will be born, there will be this spiritual birth. And every time there is spiritual birth there will be suffering without any exception whatsoever. Whenever ego is born, suffering always follows.

If we can manage or control this flow of dependent origination beginning with contact, feeling, craving, attachment, bhava, ego-birth, *dukkha*, if we can

control this then attachment won't arise and then there won't be any suffering. So the key is to be able to control the flow of paṭiccasamuppāda and then we won't have any problems.

So let's review this one more time. When the internal sense organs and the external sense objects interact, there arises sense consciousness;

when these three things – the sense organs, the sense objects, and sense consciousness – when the three are working, functioning together there arises a fourth thing which we call *phassa* (contact);

then the third stage is when *phassa* leads to *vedanā* (feelings, feelings pleasant & unpleasant);

and then *vedanā* leads to or causes *taṇhā* (craving, ignorant desire);

and *taṇhā* causes *upādāna* (attachment);

and the sixth stage is that this attachment leads to existence of the ego;

and then this *bhava* (ego existence) leads to *jāti* (birth), in particular this spiritual birth;

and *jāti*, this spiritual ego birth, causes all suffering [*dukkha*].

(Excuse us, we counted wrong it's not 9, this shortened version is just 8 – sometimes you can make it 6, sometimes 9, sometimes 12. Later we'll speak in a more detailed way where there are 11 stages.)

These 8 stages we've been speaking about is quite easy to understand. So please do your best to investigate it until you understand it.

Cakkhuñca paṭicca rūpe ca, uppajjati viññāṇaṃ tiṇṇaṃ dhammānaṃ saṅgati phasso, phassapaccayā vedanā, vedanāpaccayā taṇhā, taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ, upādānapaccayā bhavo, bhavapaccayā jāti, jātipaccayā [??1.28.50] dukkha.

We just recited the basic formula of dependent origination. Beginning with the eye and the external object, these come together and there arises eye consciousness. The three meeting together are contact. Contact is the condition for feeling. Feeling is the condition for desire. Desire is the condition for attachment. Attachment is the condition for existence. Existence is the condition for birth. And once birth arises, all the forms of suffering, grief, sorrow, and despair arise.

The Buddha himself occasionally was known to go off and just kind of sing this to himself. (And Ajahn Buddhadasa recommends this, that you take this, translate it into your own language and make a song out of this.) And if you sing this song it would do you a lot more good than all the crazy ridiculous songs that people are singing in this world. Those crazy songs that most people are singing just lead to more attachment and more suffering, but if you sing this song it can lead to more understanding and wisdom.

One time the Buddha thought he was sitting alone in the woods and began reciting and singing this to himself. Another monk had followed him and found him sitting there singing this. And then the Buddha told this monk that this is the beginning of the spiritual life, the *brahmacāriya* which is the sublime or spiritual way of living. The Buddha said that this understanding and beginning to see dependent origination is where spiritual life really begins. So he wasn't shy about singing it. He spent lots of time investigating it and trying to point it out to others.

Or we can call it 'the starting point' of emancipation.

So the subject of *paṭiccasamuppāda* is like this. Please help to try and understand this. Please investigate it, study it, and look into it until you can really see it happening, and then are able to control so that you can stop the flow of spiritual birth and you can cut off the roots and causes of suffering.

Thank you all for listening so well once again. Tomorrow we'll speak again but for today we will end at this time.

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Transcribed by Anonymous (3212-2.wdy). Reformatted in 2014.
Audio files: 5125321204020.mp3 & 1989-12 (2) Dependent Origination in 8 conditions.mp3

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