In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as taught by S. N. Goenka

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Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri-422 403, Maharashtra

WORDS OF DHAMMA

Samābito sampajānā, sato Buddhassa sāvako;
vedanā ca pajānāti, vedanānānca sambhavam.
Yattā ca cetā nirujjhanti, maggarīka khayāgāminam;
vedanānām khāya bhikkhu, nicecatā parinibbuto’ti

A follower of the Buddha, with concentration,
awareness and constant thorough understanding of
impermanence, knows with wisdom the sensations,
their arising, their cessation and the path leading to
their end. A meditator who has reached the end
(has experienced the entire range) of sensations
(and has gone beyond) is freed from craving,
is fully liberated.

—Samyutta Nikāya 2.4.249

VEDANĀ IN PAṬICCASAMUPPĀDA

(The following is an extract from The Importance of Vedanā and Sampajañña published by the Vipassana Research Institute.)

Paṭiccasamuppāda, or the Law of Dependent Origination, is fundamental to the teaching of the Buddha. Emphasizing its importance, the Buddha said:

Yo paṭiccasamuppādam passati,
so dhammaṁ passati;
Yo dhammaṁ passati,
so paṭiccasamuppādam passati.1

One who sees the paṭiccasamuppāda sees the Dhamma.

One who sees the Dhamma sees the paṭiccasamuppāda.

Paṭiccasamuppāda explains that samsāra, the process of repeated existences, is perpetuated by a chain of interconnected links of cause and effect; it also reveals the method of breaking this chain and putting an end to the process. The Buddha said:

Tanbuddhiyo puriso,
dīghamaddhāna sāmsaram;
ithabhāvaṁnāthaṁbhāvam,
sāmsāram nāṭivattati.2

The man with craving as his companion has been
flowing in the stream of repeated existences from
time immemorial. He comes into being, experiences
various types of miseries, dies again and again, and
does not put an end to this unbroken process of
becoming.

This is samsāra, the world of suffering, as explained by the Buddha. He further said:

Etam ādīnavam ātavā,
tanhaṁ dukkhabhassā sambhavam;
Vitatantho anādāno,
sato bhikkhu paribbajā.3

Rightly understanding the perils of this process,
Fully realizing craving as its cause,
Becoming free from craving and attachment,
One should mindfully lead the life of
detachment.

Such an approach, he said, will have great
benefit—

Nandi-samyojano loko,
vitakkassa vicāranam
Tanḥaṁ vipabhānena,
nibbānam iti vuccati.4

Pleasure is the binding force in the world.
Rolling thought processes are its ever-changing base.
With the complete eradication of craving, the state called nībbāṇa is attained. These statements made by the Buddha describe the nature of samsāra, the state of suffering, and the nature of nībbāṇa, the state of final emancipation. But how can detachment be developed, and craving eradicated?

This is the practical aspect of Dhamma discovered by Siddhattha Gotama, the realisation that made him a Buddha, and that he in turn revealed to the world by the doctrine of paticcasamuppāda.

According to this doctrine, twelve links form the wheel of becoming (bhavacakkha). They are:

1. avijjā (ignorance)
2. sankhāra (volitional activities)
3. viññāna (consciousness)
4. nāma-rūpa (mind and matter)
5. salāyatana (six sense doors)
6. phassa (contact)
7. vedanā (sensation)
8. tanhā (craving)
9. upādāna (clinging)
10. bhava (becoming)
11. jāti (birth)
12. jarā-marana (decay and death)

Dependent on avijjā arise sankhāra; dependent on sankhāra arises viññāna; dependent on viññāna arise nāma-rūpa; dependent on nāma-rūpa arise salāyatana; dependent on salāyatana arises phassa; dependent on phassa arises vedanā; dependent on vedanā arises tanhā; dependent on tanhā arises upādāna.

Thus, this vicious circle of misery rolls on. In other words, the origin of each link depends upon the preceding one. As long as this chain of twelve causal relations operates, the wheel of becoming (bhava-cakkha) keeps turning, bringing nothing but suffering. This process of cause and effect is called anuloma-paticcasamuppāda (direct Law of Dependent Origination).

Every link of anuloma results in dukkha, suffering, as a result of avijjā, which is at the base of every link. Thus, the process of anuloma clarifies the first two Noble Truths: dukkha-sacca, suffering, and samudaya-sacca, its origination and multiplication.

Our task is to emerge from the bhava-cakkha of dukkha. Explaining how to do so, the Buddha said that when any one of the links of the chain is broken, the wheel of becoming comes to an end, resulting in the cessation of suffering. This is called patiloma-paticcasamuppāda (the Law of Dependent Origination in reverse order) which clarifies the third and fourth Noble Truths, nirodha-sacca the cessation of suffering and nirodha-ghanini-patipāda-sacca, the path that leads to the cessation of suffering.

How can that be achieved? At which link can the chain be broken? Through deep insight, the Buddha discovered that the crucial link is vedanā. In the anuloma-paticcasamuppāda, he says ‘Vedanā-paccayā-tanhā’.

Vedanā is the cause of tanhā, which gives rise to dukkha. In order to remove the cause of dukkha or tanhā, one must not allow vedanā to give rise to tanhā; in other words, one must practise Vipassana meditation at this juncture so that avijjā becomes vijjā or paññā (wisdom). One has to observe vedanā, to experience and to comprehend the truth of its arising and passing away, anicca.

By Vipassana meditation, as one experiences vedanā in the proper way, one comes out of the delusion of nicca-saññā (perception of permanence) by the development of anicca-bodha or anicca-vijjā (the wisdom of impermanence) towards vedanā.

This is practised by observing with equanimity the arising and passing away of vedanā. With anicca-bodha, the habit pattern of the mind changes. Instead of the earlier pattern of vedanā-paccayā tanhā, through anicca-vijjā it becomes vedanā-paccayā paññā. As paññā becomes stronger and stronger, naturally saññā, and with it, tanhā, becomes weaker and weaker.

The process of multiplication of suffering with the base of avijjā then becomes the process of the cessation of suffering, with vijjā as the base. As this process continues, a time comes when there is the complete cessation of vedanā as well as tanhā—‘Vedanā-nirodha, tanhā-nirodho’.

This state of emancipation is a state beyond mind and matter, where both vedanā and saññā cease. One can experience this for a few seconds, minutes, hours, or days when, according to one’s own capacity, one becomes established in nirodha-samāpatti by practising Vipassana.

After the period of nirodha-samāpatti, when one comes back to the sensuous field of mind and matter, one again experiences vedanā. But now the whole habit pattern of the mind has changed, and continued practice leads to the stage where one does
not generate aversion or craving at all because anusaya and āsēva (the deep-rooted mental impurities) are eradicated. In this way, by the breaking of one link—vedanā, the whole process is shattered and the wheel of repeated existence is completely broken.

If we want to advance on the path of liberation, we have to work at the level of vedanā because it is here that the momentum of the wheel of misery can be arrested.

With vedanā starts the turning of the bhava-cakka, leading (because of avijjā) to vedanā-paccayā tanhā, which causes suffering. This is the path, which ignorant persons (puthujjana) follow, since they react to vedanā and generate tanhā.

However, from vedanā, the dhamma-cakka, or the wheel of cessation of suffering (dukkha-nirodha-gāmini-patipadā) can start to rotate, leading to vedanā-nirodha, tanhā-nirodho—the end of craving, as a result of anicca-vijjā or paññā, leading to the cessation of suffering. This is the path which wise persons (sāpājīna) follow by not reacting to vedanā, because they have developed anicca-bodha by the practice of Vipassana.

Many of the contemporaries of the Buddha held the view that craving causes suffering and that to remove suffering one has to abstain from the objects of craving. Having learnt to examine the depths of his mind, the Buddha realized that between the external object and mental reflex of craving is a missing link—vedanā (sensation).

Whenever we encounter an object through the five physical senses or the mind, a sensation arises; and based on the sensation, tanhā arises. If the sensation is pleasant we crave to prolong it, and if it is unpleasant we crave to be rid of it. It is in the chain of Dependent Origination that the Buddha expressed his great discovery.

Phassa-paccayā vedanā
Vedanā-paccayā tanhā.
Dependent on contact, sensation arises.
Dependent on sensation, craving arises.

The immediate cause for the arising of craving and of suffering is, therefore, not something outside of us but rather the sensations that occur within us. To free ourselves of craving and of suffering we must deal with this inner reality of sensations. Doing so is the practical way to emerge from suffering.

By developing anicca-vijjā (the wisdom of impermanence), we learn to cut the knots of our misery and witness the true nature of Dhamma. Therefore, vedanā is the cause of our bondage when not properly observed, and it is also the means of liberation when properly observed by understanding the Dhamma, the law of patīcchasamuppaṇḍa.

Notes: (All references are from VRI edition)
1. Majjhima Nikāya 1.306
2. Suttanipāta 745
3. Ibid. 746
4. Samyutta Nikāya 1.1.64
5. Mahāvagga (Vinaya Piṭaka) 1

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**ONE DAY CHILDREN’S COURSES IN MUMBAI**

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<tr>
<td>11-4</td>
<td>Ulhasnagar</td>
<td>10-12 yrs</td>
<td>8 &amp; 9-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-4</td>
<td>Andheri</td>
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<td>25-4</td>
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<td>13-16 yrs</td>
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<td>9-5</td>
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<td>23-5</td>
<td>Mulund</td>
<td>10-12 yrs</td>
<td>20 &amp; 21-5</td>
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**Course Timing:** 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **Registration Timings:** 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Course Addresses:**
- **Andheri:** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows, Andheri (W), Phone: 2683 4820.
- **Mulund:** Mulund College of Commerce, Sarojini Naidu Road, Near Ration Office and Court, Mulund (W) Phone: 5598 3338.
- **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak High School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Phone: 252 2693. [NB *Please bring cushion. *Please register on the specified phone numbers. If you are unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. *Please arrive on time for the course.]
VIPASSANA NEWSLETTER ON THE WEBSITE

Current and past issues of the Hindi Vipassana Patrika and English Newsletter can be downloaded from the VRI website:
http://www.vri.dhamma.org/NewslettersHindi/index.html
http://www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters/index.html

VIPASSANA WORKSHOPS IN 2004

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<td>Dhamma Tapovana, Igatpuri</td>
<td>15 April (8 p.m.) to 25 April (11 a.m.).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhamma Punna, Pune city (Swargate)</td>
<td>15 May (10 a.m.) to 29 May (5 p.m.). ATs can attend from 26 to 29 May.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhamma Sikhara, Dharamshala (H.P.)</td>
<td>1 June to 15 June.</td>
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<td>Dhamma Kota, Rajkot (Gujarat)</td>
<td>4 June (evening) to 6 June (evening) for ATs, Dhamma workers, and trustees.</td>
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<td>Dhamma Setu, Chennai (Tamil Nadu)</td>
<td>29 July to 30 July. AT Workshop: 12 August to 15 August.</td>
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IMPORTANT NOTICE

Vipassana Research Institute is planning to compile a digital catalogue of Asokan edicts or pillars. Meditators are requested to report any edicts or pillars in their area because there is a possibility that some Asokan edicts and pillars are yet to be identified.

GOENKAJI’S INTERVIEW ON ZEE TV

Zee TV is broadcasting a program called Urja featuring Goenkaji every Friday at 12:00 noon. In this program, Goenkaji answers questions about the different aspects of Dhamma (Dharma), Meditators may inform their family and friends about the opportunity to hear Goenkaji expound on the universal Dhamma.

Questions for Goenkaji may be sent to: Urja, Zee TV, Post Box No. 1, Andheri (W), Mumbai 400 099.
Email: response@zeenetwork.com (Please put ‘Urja’ in the subject line.)

SUBSCRIPTION TO ENGLISH/HINDI MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: ANNUAL: RS 30 (U.S. $10 OUTSIDE INDIA); LIFE SUBSCRIPTION: RS 500 (U.S. $100 OUTSIDE INDIA) BY BANK DRAFT, PAYABLE AT IGATPURI IN FAVOUR OF VRI.

Anapana Course For Visually Challenged Children

A one-day Anapana course was organised for students of the Government Blind School at Nashik Road on 8th February 2004. The twenty-seven students who took part in the course said that they had benefited from the course. Later, they sent their feedback in Braille. There will be regular group meditation for these students in their school.

CHANGE IN RESPONSIBILITIES

Ācaryas
Mr. Sher Singh & Mrs. Vimala Kumari Jain
To assist the area teacher in serving Dhamma Thali, Jaipur and to serve Jail courses in Rajasthan

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Assistant Teachers
Mr. T. Madhusudan Prasad, Hyderabad
Mr. M. A. Siva Subramanian, Madurai
Mr. Van Shafer, USA

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers
1. Mr. Sigitas Baltramaitis, Lithuania
2. Mr. Christian & Mrs. Rosi Hild, Switzerland
3. Ms. Nancy Rosen, Canada

Children's Course Teachers
1. Mr. Anil Pandarinath Mali, Jalgaon
2. Mrs. Pushpa Subhashcandra Zawar, Jalgaon
3. Dr. Deepak Dodhu Narkhede, Jalgaon
4. Mrs. Deepa Deepak Narkhede, Jalgaon
5. Mr. Prakash Khermar, Burhanpur (M. P.)
6. Ms. Jyotika Sharma, Bhatechh (H. P.)
7. Dr. Krishna Vasudevan &
8. Ms. Chitra Krishna, Chennai
9. Mr. Ruchi Bajaj, Chennai
10. Mr. Jonathan Mirin &
11. Mrs. Godlieve Richard, USA
12. Mr. Adam Shepard &
13. Mrs. Rebecca Shepard, USA
14. Mr. Lee Roberts, USA
15. Mr. Jayde Lin-Roberts, USA
16. Ms. Laura Bruggeman, USA
17. Ms. Marta van Patten, USA
18. Mr. Eric Sedlacek, USA
19. Mr. Josh McEwen, USA
20. Mr. Lee Roberts, USA

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