

SN 12.2

Nidānavagga Saṃyutta (Connected Discourses Beginning with Causation)

Nidāna Saṃyutta (Connected Discourses on Causation)

Dasabala Vagga (The Section on the Ten Powers)

Vibhaṅga Sutta

“An Explanation”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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Once, while staying in Sāvattthī, the Blessed One addressed the Bhikkhus by saying:

“Bhikkhus, I will teach you the Doctrine of Dependent Arising and I will explain it for you. Listen carefully to what I shall say and attend closely. I will now speak.”

“Yes, Bhante,” the Bhikkhus replied. The Blessed One said this:

“And what, Bhikkhus, is Dependent Arising (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*)?”

“In the presence of ignorance as their condition, habitual tendencies arise; In the presence of habitual tendencies as its condition, sense awareness arises; In the presence of sense awareness as their condition, mentality and materiality arise; In the presence of mentality and materiality as their condition, the six sense bases arise; In the presence of the six sense bases as its condition, contact arises; In the presence of contact as its condition, feeling arises; In the presence of feeling as its condition, craving arises; In the presence of craving as its condition, grabbing arises; In the presence of grabbing as its condition, becoming arises; In the presence of becoming as its condition, rebirth arises; and in the presence of rebirth as their condition, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish arise. Thus, this whole accumulation of suffering arises.

“And what exactly, Bhikkhus, is aging and death (*jarāmarāṇa*)?”

“The aging of all beings in the various realms of existence, their growing old, the erosion of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline in vitality, the body becoming decrepit with the burden of years, degeneration of the faculties: all this is called aging.

“The passing away of all beings in the various realms of existence, their mortality, the breakup of their bodies, the coming to an end, perishability, impending death, completion of time, the breakup of the aggregates, the laying down of the carcass: this is called death.

“Therefore, these processes of both aging and death are together called aging-and-death.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is rebirth (*jāti*)?

“The birth of beings in the various realms of existence, their rebirth process, the descent into a womb, the composition of the new body, the manifestation of the aggregates, the obtaining of the sense bases. All this is called rebirth.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is becoming (*bhava*)?

“There are these three states of becoming: becoming into the sensual realms, becoming into the form realms, and becoming into the formless realms. This is called becoming.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is grabbing (*upādāna*)?

“There are these four types of grabbing: grabbing onto sensual pleasures, grabbing onto views, grabbing onto rites and rituals, and grabbing onto the belief in a substantial self. This is called grabbing.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is craving (*taṇhā*)?

“There are these six types of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odors, craving for tastes, craving for tactile objects, craving for mental phenomena. This is called craving.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is feeling (*vedanā*)?

“There are these six types of feeling: feeling that comes up as a result of eye contact, feeling that comes up as a result of ear contact, feeling that comes up as a result of nose contact, feeling that comes up as a result of tongue contact, feeling that comes up as a result of body contact, feeling that comes up as a result of mind contact. This is called feeling.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is contact (*phassa*)?

“There are these six types of contact: eye contact, ear contact, nose contact, tongue contact, body contact, mind contact. This is called contact.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the six sense bases (*saḷāyatana*)?

“The eye base, the ear base, the nose base, the tongue base, the body base, and the mind base. These are called the six sense bases.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is mentality/materiality (*nāmarūpa*)?

“Feeling, perception, intention, contact, attention: this is called mentality. The four great primary elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called form. Therefore, these two groups, comprising both mental and physical processes, are together called mentality/materiality.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is sense awareness (*viññāṇa*)?

“There are these six types of sense awareness: eye sense awareness, ear sense awareness, nose sense awareness, tongue sense awareness, body sense awareness, mind sense awareness. This is called sense awareness.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the habitual tendencies (*sāṅkhārā*)?”

“There are these three kinds of habitual tendencies: the bodily habitual tendencies, the verbal habitual tendencies, the mental habitual tendencies. These are called habitual tendencies.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is ignorance (*avijjā*)?”

“Not knowing suffering, not knowing the origin of suffering, not knowing the ending of suffering, not knowing the way that leads to the ending of suffering. This is called ignorance.

“Thus, Bhikkhus, in the presence of ignorance as their condition, habitual tendencies arise; In the presence of habitual tendencies as its condition, sense awareness arises; In the presence of sense awareness as their condition, mentality and materiality arise; In the presence of mentality and materiality as their condition, the six sense bases arise; In the presence of the six sense bases as its condition, contact arises; In the presence of contact as its condition, feeling arises; In the presence of feeling as its condition, craving arises; In the presence of craving as its condition, grabbing arises; In the presence of grabbing as its condition, becoming arises; In the presence of becoming as its condition, rebirth arises; and in the presence of rebirth as their condition, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish arise. Thus, this whole accumulation of suffering arises.

“But with the remainder-less fading away and ending of ignorance, comes the ending of the habitual tendencies; with the ending of the habitual tendencies, comes the ending of sense awareness; with the ending of sense awareness, comes the ending of mentality/materiality; with the ending of mentality/materiality, comes the ending of the six sense bases; with the ending of the six sense bases, comes the ending of contact; with the ending of contact, comes the ending of feeling; with the ending of feeling, comes the ending of craving; with the ending of craving, comes the ending of grabbing; with the ending of grabbing, comes the ending of becoming; with the ending of becoming, comes the ending of rebirth; with the ending of rebirth, comes the ending of ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

“In this manner, Bhikkhus, this whole accumulation of suffering comes to an end.”

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu