

Wat Pah Nanachat Talks series II, Part 2 of 3

IDAPPACAYATA AS THE HEART OF BUDDHISM (cont.)

by Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

Interpreted into English by Santikaro Bhikkhu

A Dhamma lecture given at Suan Mokkh on 29 December 1991

In 1991, foreign-born monastic disciples of Venerable Ajahn Chah, led by Ajahn Sumedho, made a second group pilgrimage to Suan Mokkh to pay respects to Tan Ajahn Buddhadāsa, who was held in high esteem by Ajahn Chah. Tan Ajahn spoke with them about the fundamental Law of Nature at the core of the Buddha's realization and teaching. Tan Ajahn spoke in Thai and Santikaro Bhikkhu interpreted into English live. All Ajahn's teachings are now available on: www.suanmokkh.org, <https://soundcloud.com/buddhadasa> and <https://www.youtube.com/@buddhadasabhikkhu7829>.

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May we continue our discussion of *idappaccayatā* from yesterday?

There is an important principle in Buddhism, which is to see all things with right wisdom as they really are, to see all things with right wisdom as they really are. To see things as they truly are is to see *idappaccayatā*.

All things arise and develop and carry on according to causes and conditions. To see all things with right wisdom as they really are is just to see this fact of *idappaccayatā* that each thing arises dependent on a certain condition and then this thing arises dependent on certain conditions, and then this thing arises dependent upon certain conditions. This goes on continuously. This is how things truly are. This is what it is to see things rightly as they truly are. When we speak of *idappaccayatā* we can distinguish two aspects to it. The first aspect is when we speak of all things, both living and non-living, physical and mental. But when we speak specifically of living things, then we call it '*paticcasamuppādā*' or 'dependent origination.'

Living things experience *sukha* (happiness) and *dukkha* (pain), and this experience of *dukkha*, of pain, of unsatisfactoriness is our basic problem. And so, it's because of this that we need to understand *idappaccayatā* or *paticcasamuppādā* in order to deal with this fundamental problem that is the *dukkha* which we experience.

Even so we ought to understand the entirety of *idappaccayatā* as it applies to living things as well as non-living things. We ought to know everything about

idappaccayatā. We ought to know all of *idappaccayatā* because the *idappaccayatā* or the conditionality of non-living things is connected to and relevant to the *idappaccayatā* of living things. The conditioned arising of inanimate things then impinges and affects the conditioned arising, or the dependent origination in living things, and leads to dukkha. This is why we ought to know all aspects of *idappaccayatā*. Therefore, we ought to understand how *idappaccayatā* as it applies to the entire universe, how the universe is established or is created through *idappaccayatā*.

Everything arises from *idappaccayatā*. The universe – the cosmos – arises through *idappaccayatā*, and then from the cosmos there are all the stars, and then of all the stars there is the sun which arises from all the stars, and then based on the sun there arises this solar system with all its planets, depending on the solar system there arises the Earth as well as the other planets. Then depending on this Earth – this planet on which we live – there arises life, and then life arises and develops to the point there is the kind of life that's sitting right here, involved in this discussion. All things arise and develop due to *idappaccayatā* in this way. Things that were non-living have led to that which is living, and so that which is living right here and now, involved in this discussion, is dependent on non-living things. This is the entirety of *idappaccayatā* that we should understand.

Thus, there is nothing strange or odd. The solar system arises merely because of *idappaccayatā*. The sun and all the other stars appear just because of *idappaccayatā*. All the planets and worlds arise due to *idappaccayatā*. This Earth and all the life on this Earth arise because of *idappaccayatā*. There's no reason to think that any of it is strange or queer. There is nothing which is strange or odd because it all arises through *idappaccayatā*. Please remember this sentence. There is nothing strange or odd because everything happens according to *idappaccayatā*.

If you examine this, you'll see that the things that you consider to be strange or odd are things you've never seen before. But once you've seen them, you no longer think they're odd or queer or strange. For example, the sun, there's nothing strange about it if we see it according to *idappaccayatā*. If we see it wisely, then there's nothing strange or odd about it, unlike the scientists who keep coming up with new and strange things about it, watching it all year round, talking about all the strange and odd things. But if we see it according to *idappaccayatā*, then we no longer feel there's anything strange or queer about it.

All the stars, all the planets, all the worlds are the same. There's nothing strange or weird about them if we see them according to *idappaccayatā*. No matter how many dozens, hundreds, thousands, or millions of stars and planets there are, there's nothing strange about any of them. If the scientists realize the *idappaccayatā* of matter and energy thoroughly, completely and correctly, then they'll no longer feel that there's anything strange about it. And then the word 'strange,' the word 'weird' will disappear from this world.

Due to *idappaccayatā*, new things are being endlessly produced and created. Causes and conditions are giving rise to new things endlessly. But if we don't understand this *idappaccayatā*, then these new things seem strange or odd, but once we realize that

it's all just *idappaccayatā*, then there is no longer anything strange or weird in this universe.

It's easier to focus on this world, the one that's closest to us. If we look at this world, what in it is strange or weird? There's just the Earth and then the plants and trees, the animals and human beings. What is strange about any of it? There's just the *idappaccayatā* of all the compounding and concocting, what is called '*sankhāra*,' the compounding and concocting of things. That's all there is – nothing strange about any of it.

For example, flowers: They keep inventing new kinds of flowers so beautiful and strange. People get all excited about it, but these people who get all caught up with and excited by beautiful and strange flowers, this is just foolishness. In fact, it's really stupid because there's no understanding, no recognition of *idappaccayatā* that these so-called beautiful and strange things, these wonderful marvelous things, are just being newly created and concocted. This is a process that goes on and on, endlessly creating new things. If we see it according to *idappaccayatā*, then the words 'beautiful' and 'strange' lose their meaning, and we no longer think that there is anything beautiful or strange in this world. We see that beauty in strangeness is just a product of concoction.

Or music: The harmonious wonderful music that we consider to be so beautiful and excellent and artistic and superb. All this wonderful music, which is also very expensive, when we see it that way, that's just foolishness. We only see it as melodious and beautiful and wonderful because we're ignorant of *idappaccayatā*. But when we recognize that it's all just a product of *idappaccayatā*, just the endless concocting of new things, then we no longer feel it is beautiful or melodious or harmonious or any of that. And then both the harmoniousness and its opposite the inharmoniousness: The beauty or ugliness of the music disappears and all that is left is sound, sound which follows its own natural principles.

There's a secret that we have to be pretty stupid to accept it all as beautiful and harmonious – what the musicians and the experts on music stipulate that such and such notes and such and such chords combined in this and that way – that this is beautiful and harmonious according to the laws of sound and music and all that. To accept all that from beginning to end is foolishness. For us to take it all as beautiful, marvelous, harmonious depends on our own stupidity.

Or those expensive paintings that are now selling for millions of dollars, where all the critics and experts tell us how beautiful they are and how the form and the theory behind it are incredibly profound and masterful, and so people are taught how incredibly genius these painters are. To believe all that, to accept it, to buy it, we have to be thoroughly stupid to consider all that to be beautiful and profound. But if we're not stupid, then we don't fall for it. It's just a bunch of paint on a canvas. We don't see any special meaning, profundity, or beauty in it at all. Not only wouldn't we pay a penny for it, but even if they gave it to us for free, we wouldn't know what to do with it. Where are we going to stick this thing up on the wall just so it kind of takes up space? If we understand these things according to *idappaccayatā* then they don't deceive us, and we're not tricked into buying all this illusion about beauty, harmony,

and all that. There's a secret here that we need to understand so that we're not tricked by any of these things.

The same goes for the fragrances smelled by the nose and the delicious flavors of foods. These are just products of concocting, where things are concocting, and then there are further reactions concocted to the fragrances, to the wonderful flavors and delicious tastes. This is all a subject of people who are deceived by and indulge in the forms seen by the eyes, the sounds heard by the ears, the odors smelled by the nose, the flavors tasted by the tongue, the physical sensations experienced by the body, and the thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories experienced by the mind. It's just a lot of endless concocting according to the law of *idappaccayatā*.

All this change through the power of *idappaccayatā* has no effect on dogs, like the dog laying here. All this beauty and harmoniousness and all these smells and flavors have no influence on this dog here. So, which is better? Is it better to be a dog or a human being? Is it better to be deceived by all this change going on according to *idappaccayatā*? Or is it better to be unaffected by it? Is it better to be tricked by it all or to be indifferent to it all?

All the problems and questions which happen to human beings – the tens of thousands, the hundreds of thousands, the millions, the billions of problems happening to all these people around the world – none of them happen to this dog here, because all these problems due to the change of *idappaccayatā* don't happen to the dogs.

Idappaccayatā follows two main streams or lines. There's the positive stream where things are concocted in a way and we take them to be positive and we fall in love with them, and because of this falling in love with things, we get very selfish. And then we fight all kind of wars to get and keep and have the things we love. So, this is the positive side or positive stream of *idappaccayatā*, which is responsible for all our wars.

Then there's the negative stream of *idappaccayatā* that leads to all the negative emotions like anger, hatred, ill will, and all that, which just brings up lots of dukkha, brings up lots of pain and dissatisfaction. It stresses us, makes us very tense until our bodies and minds become disordered, and these disorders even become insanity and we go crazy because of this negative side of *idappaccayatā*. It's because we don't understand it, it's because we're not aware of it, we don't recognize it in time, then we're deceived by it all, leading to all these problems. Because we don't catch it in time, because we're not aware in time of these positive and negative streams of *idappaccayatā*, all the dukkha, all the problems in our lives are created.

Because we're unaware, because we don't recognize how everything happens according to *idappaccayatā*, this leads to the problem of excess. Nowadays, everything in our lives is excessive. Food, clothing, homes, our technologies, all the things we do are excessive. We do all kinds of things that are unnecessary, even things that are unhealthy, because of this ignorance of *idappaccayatā*. So, we have all this excess, and this excess leads to all kinds of conflicts, confrontations, and problems within us and in society. All the crises, all the wars, all the terrible problems

confronting humanity nowadays are because of this excessiveness that happens when we don't recognize, when we don't understand *idappaccayatā*.

When we're no longer deceived by this excessiveness, then we can live in moderation. We can live according to this basic principle of Dhamma. We can practice the Dhamma when we're no longer caught up in excessiveness. The positive leads to excessiveness, the negative leads to excessiveness. We need to find the middle way that is not excessive in any way so that we can escape from all the problems, dangers, and crises generated by our obsession with excessiveness, with extremism.

So, we ought to understand this law of *idappaccayatā* as much as we are able. Just as much as we are able is enough. For example, on the large scale we can understand *idappaccayatā* in terms of the evolution or development of the universe until we come to the present situation of this planet.

Further, we should study more specifically until we see that because of the influence of this thing, then this thing occurs. Because one thing has an influence, this other thing happens. For example, because there is the sun, there is sunlight shining into this world. The reality of sunlight here in this world depends on the existence of the sun. Just this is *idappaccayatā*. We need to see it in its specifics, like this. Because sunlight shines into the atmosphere on this planet, then there's evaporation. Through evaporation, the water vapors spread around the world and there is enough moisture, and then because of that there are plants, and then the plants develop and there are other life forms, animals and eventually human beings. All of this happens because of *idappaccayatā* – this leading to this, this leading to this.

Through *idappaccayatā* the elements are created, all the kinds of elements. For example, there's the Earth element, the Water element, the Fire element, and the Wind element, then the Space element and the Mind element, and then there are all kinds of other elements. These are created by *idappaccayatā*, but it doesn't just stop there. Then these elements interact, they react with each other, they're compounded, they're concocted into all kinds of new combinations, and then this just keeps going on and on and on through *idappaccayatā*.

Because of all these elements being created, then all kinds of further developments take place. For example, through this concocting and compounding of elements, then there comes about life in the form of plants, and this plant life brings about all kinds of changes. And then there are animals, and animal life further changes the environments until finally people occur, and then people change the environment in all kinds of ways. Now we're with people all over the place. They're not only changing the environment, they're destroying the world as we can all see by just looking around. So, this is how *idappaccayatā* brings new things into being and this ceaseless, endless process of change due to *idappaccayatā* keeps going on and on and on.

All the change that takes place naturally is incredible. There're all kinds of natural changes taking place, and then the changes which are assisted by human beings are even more and even stranger. And then all these strange changes brought about by human actions, human beings then fall for all this. They're deceived by it all and

become obsessed with it. Because of our indulgence in and obsession with all these strange changes that we bring about – all the positive and negative things that we create – then all the different kinds of defilements occur. And so then we've created and concocted a world in which there's lots of strange change, and then they're all these defilements and all the selfishness of our defilements, and we get more and more lost in the positive and the negative. And this is what comes about when we don't understand the natural process of *idappaccayatā*, and then we get lost in it all, creating more and more defilements, more and more selfishness, and increasing destruction.

Let's make a little comparison seeing which situation has more problems and which has less. First, take the animals and see how much trouble they have, how much dukkha they experience because of defilements. Then take our distant ancestors, the human beings who lived say 100,000 years ago, and then compare this with the gradual development of human society and civilization with the steady increase of complications and of problems until we come to the present situation where now the amount of problems is so enormous and so complicated. If we make a comparison like this, we won't even have numbers with which to calculate the differences. This is what happens when we don't understand, when we're unable to realize and recognize *idappaccayatā*. And not understanding it, not seeing it, then we get caught up in the natural change of *idappaccayatā*. We're deceived by it. Take a careful look and see the difference in our problems now. We'll say the problems of the animals or human beings 50,000 years ago. See how through not understanding *idappaccayatā* there arises all kinds of *taṇhā*, all the forms of desire. And then we keep feeding this desire with our man-made concoctions and technologies because we don't understand *idappaccayatā*. This is the first fact that we need to understand, that the entire universe arises and develops according to the law of *idappaccayatā*, and if we don't understand this fact, then it leads to endless problems and dukkha.

Because we don't understand or see *idappaccayatā*, we deceive ourselves that all these modern developments are progress. As we get more and more obsessed in this change and in these new concoctions and creations, we deceive ourselves by taking it all to be progress. Is this wise or is it stupid? Is this sanity or is it craziness? And if you take a good look, you'll see that this so-called progress that we're thoroughly infatuated with is just going to continue, and it's going to get worse because people don't see this so-called progress as it really is. There's just going to be more and more of it. There's going to be more destruction and more suffering because of this obsession and delusion with the change of *idappaccayatā*.

And please don't forget what the Buddha said, that to see all things with right wisdom as they really are. This means to see all things – everything without any exceptions – as they really are, as according to their truth, their genuine nature, and to see this with right wisdom, with genuine understanding, not by concocting it through thoughts, opinions, theories, and beliefs, but to see it deeply and directly with our own wisdom. This is what the Buddha meant by seeing all things as they really are with right wisdom, which is to see that they're all *idappaccayatā*, that all things arise and carry on and cease due to causes and conditions. If we see this correctly, then we won't fall for all the changes, all the positive, negative changes taking place in the world. But if we don't see things as they really are as *idappaccayatā* with right wisdom, then we're deceived by things and we get sucked up into all the change, all the so-called progress

and all the pain of that positive and negative change. So, don't forget to see all things with right understanding as they truly are.

If we see things correctly as they truly are, as *idappaccayatā*, then we'll no longer be deceived by the change of things, will no longer be tricked into taking things, seeing things dualistically, will no longer be tricked by all the pairs of opposites such as beautiful and ugly, nice smelling and nasty smelling, long and short, black and white, tall and short, and all the other pairs and dualities. Truly seeing *idappaccayatā* will keep us from falling for all these pairs of opposites, and then we won't be concocted by all that illusion.

For example, things are concocted this far and then we call it 'short' and then it's concocted a little further and we call it 'long.' People who are foolish think that they're totally different, that these are opposites, short and long, but if we see it with wisdom, we see it's just the concocting and compounding of causes and conditions. It's just *idappaccayatā*. You can't really say this is 'short' and that's 'long.' It's just *idappaccayatā*. There is no real short or long except in our illusions.

Or for example, black and white: When there's no light being reflected, then it's black, it's dark, but when the light is reflected, then it's white or bright. Or if the wavelengths of the light are different, then there are different colors – red, yellow, blue, whatever. But in fact, none of these things is really different. There're no real differences between black and white or between all colors. It's just that the flow of causes and conditions – the stream of *idappaccayatā* – is concocting, is creating things in somewhat different ways. It's all just *idappaccayatā*. If we see it this way, then none of these things, none of these colors, none of the black and white can delude us.

Further there's fragrance and foulness – the different kinds of odors. Some we think are very fragrant, others rather foul. But really, what's going on there are just volatile gases stimulating the nervous system in the nose. If the volatile gas is at a certain strength then we experience it as fragrant, but if it becomes more intense then we experience it as foul. You can take women's perfume: If you have it in a small quantity people think it smells really good. But if you put on too much then it really stinks. There's no real opposite between fragrance and foulness. It's just the concocting of these causes and conditions are more or less intense. One is a little weaker, one's a little stronger. It's all just *idappaccayatā*. There're no real opposites or dualities taking place. If we understand all of this according to *idappaccayatā*, then it doesn't become a problem for us, we're not tricked by any of it. But if we don't understand it, then fragrance and foulness have tremendous importance for us and creates a lot of problems and dukkha for us. But in the end, there's no real fragrance or foulness. There's just the concocting of volatile gases stimulating the nervous system. That's all that there is.

It's the same with tastes, with flavors. Some we think are delicious and others we think are pretty nasty or foul. Once again, it's just this certain kind of concocting. If it only concocts a little on one level then it seems bland or tasteless. If it concocts with a little more intensity, we experience it as sweet. If the concocting becomes stronger then it becomes salty or bitter. All that's taking place are differences in the intensity of the concocting, but because of our ignorance because we don't understand

idappaccayatā, we take these things to be bland, sweet, salty, sour, bitter, whatever. And then we get all caught up in these flavors and tastes, we spend hours cooking all these different kinds of food. We're willing to spend millions of dollars in fancy restaurants to get these different kinds of strange tastes that people are concocting. All of this is just because of our ignorance because we don't understand, we don't see the *idappaccayatā* of it all. In fact, none of these things really exist – the blandness, the sweetness, the sourness, deliciousness, non-deliciousness – these don't really exist. There's just the concocting and compounding of *idappaccayatā*.

The modern world now is full of the art of concocting. We are becoming experts at the art of concocting new things – newer things which are ever more powerful in their ability to influence us and get us to indulge and get all caught up in these new things. We're able to invent and create all kinds of strange and wonderful things, and then this tricks people, then people indulge in these things and so we get ever more complicated, the amount of problems grows. So, this is the art of the modern world, endlessly creating ever more enticing things. We've mastered this concocting, and this is the fact of the modern world in which humanity is living now.

Allow me to mention a personal experience. I hope you don't take it to be too personal. When I was young, I read a book about the Grand Canyon in America. And after reading about it, I had this incredibly strong desire to go and see it. This was the most important thing in my life. If I could somehow get the money, then I would go and look at the Grand Canyon. It seemed so wonderful and mysterious and beautiful. I just had to go see it. But then later, when I understood *idappaccayatā*, I lost all interest in going to see this thing. You could even pay me lots of money and I wouldn't bother to go. There's no way you could even drag me there. Because seeing the *idappaccayatā* that it lost all this power to concoct and delude my mind. This is an example of the difference between when we don't understand *idappaccayatā* and take things to be strange and marvelous, mysterious, and then it can really get our mind spinning. And then when we see everything as *idappaccayatā*, then they don't have any more influence or power on us.

Nowadays, I don't want to go to America or Europe or Africa or any of these places. I'm afraid if I go there, all I'll see is *idappaccayatā*. So, I don't want to go anywhere anyway. I don't even want to go to heaven, because if I go to heaven I'm sure that all I'll see is more *idappaccayatā*, so it's not worth the trouble, it's not worth the time. So, I've been able to save myself just because of *idappaccayatā*. There's no need to go to anywhere. It's all just *idappaccayatā*.

Right here is good enough. All you have to do is open your eyes and you can see the trees, the trees are full of all the change of *idappaccayatā*. And then the dogs, the chickens, even lifeless things like these benches and rocks, are full of the change. The atoms and molecules in them are changing according to *idappaccayatā*. The ground is full of *idappaccayatā*. Wherever one is, all one has to do is open one's eyes and there's nothing but *idappaccayatā* everywhere. But if we don't see this, then our mind is full of the *idappaccayatā* of the concocting of desires, attachments, defilements, selfishness, ego, and dukkha. If we are unaware of this *idappaccayatā*, then we just keep going through the dependent originations of desires, attachments, and dukkha. But when we just can open up our eyes and see that it's nothing but *idappaccayatā*, then we're freed of that concocting of attachment, ego, and dukkha.

To investigate this, we ought to follow the Buddha's advice, which is to look inside. One doesn't need to waste a lot of time with the things outside, out there. You won't get the same results. But look inside and see the reality of *idappaccayatā* in here. For example, in the body, look at all the systems, the subsystems that make up this body – the circulatory system, the respiratory system, the digestive system, the nervous system, and all the other systems and processes within this body. All of them are just an endless process of change through the law of *idappaccayatā*. And then to look at this system of the mind, just this one word 'mind,' but there're all kinds of things happening. Everything happens to the mind. If there's happiness, it's the mind. If there is dukkha, it happens to the mind. So see this process of concocting of the mind that brings about happiness and dukkha. Observe the *idappaccayatā* within these bodies in all their systems and within the mind, especially in the way that happiness and dukkha are concocted in the mind. If we can see this, then none of this *idappaccayatā* is a problem for us. It's just the natural reality of the universe. But if we don't recognize *idappaccayatā*, we're deluded by it, we're deluded by the happiness and the pain, and this delusion turns it all into problems, conflicts, intention for us. So, we need to follow the Buddha's advice and study *idappaccayatā* within these bodies, within these minds. So, inwardly investigate the body, investigate the mind, and investigate the *idappaccayatā* which governs all of it.

Yesterday we talked about four meanings of *idappaccayatā*. First of all, there's the fact that the entire universe arises and carries on, develops due to *idappaccayatā*. The second is that if we respond or react stupidly without wisdom to *idappaccayatā*, then dukkha manifests, dukkha occurs. But if we respond wisely to *idappaccayatā*, then there's no dukkha, dukkha doesn't happen. And if we can control, if we can master *idappaccayatā* absolutely, completely, then there is nibbanā. Nibbanā reveals itself completely. These are the four central aspects or facts of *idappaccayatā* that we encourage all of you to investigate thoroughly.

Now, we will demonstrate why it's like that. We'll show why it's as we mentioned in these four aspects or principles. First, when we clearly, directly see this reality of *idappaccayatā*, of things arising and then changing and flowing, then we see the fact of ceaseless change, the things are changing and transforming without stop, endlessly, and without let up. So, when we see this constant flow of change and transformation, this is to realize *aniccatā*, the fact of impermanence, of the universal impermanence.

Then we look further and we see that we have to live with these things that are always changing. And not only that we ourselves are impermanent and always changing. And when we have to live with impermanent things, when we ourselves are impermanent, then that is painful. That's hard to live with, it's hard to endure, hard to put up with. This difficulty, this inherent painfulness of things that are always changing is called '*dukkhatā*,' the fact of dukkha-ness, the universal quality of dukkha brought about by all this change.

When we directly see these facts of impermanence and that living with all this impermanence is inherently painful, is inherently dukkha, then we see that there's no self, there's no individual entity anywhere. This is called '*anattā*' or '*anattatā*,' the fact that all things are not self, that there's nothing here that is some separate individual entity.

When we realize this impermanence, dukkha-ness, and selflessness of things, then we see that's just how things are. This is the naturalness of things, things are just ordinarily, naturally impermanent, dukkha, and not self. This is to see *dhammaṭṭhitatā*, the naturalness, the ordinariness of things.

When we see that all the impermanence, dukkha-ness, and selflessness is just naturally like that, when we see that this is the ordinary natural way that things are just like that, then we see that it is like that because of the natural law, the Law of Nature, which these things are like this because that's the natural law. This is called '*dhammaniyāmatā*' or the kind of natural lawfulness of things, especially of impermanence, dukkha-ness, and not self.

And when we've seen all of this, then we really see *idappaccayatā*. The fact that things arise and develop because of causes and conditions – to seeing *aniccatā*, *dukkhatā*, *anattatā*, *dhammaṭṭhitatā*, *dhammaniyāmatā* – then we see that things are like that because of this natural law and that natural law is *idappaccayatā*, the fact that everything happens due to causes and conditions.

When we see all of that thoroughly and profoundly, then we see *suññatā*. We see that all of that is void of self, that in all the impermanence and the change in the naturalness and the Law of Nature, there's no self. No independent entity can be found anywhere. It's all void. It's void of self. Please remember this carefully. Voidness or *suññatā* is crucial for understanding Dhamma. There is no self anywhere. There's just *idappaccayatā*. Nothing anywhere can be taken as a self. It's all void of self. All there is the *idappaccayatā*.

And seeing all of that up to really seeing *suññatā* or voidness, then one sees that this is just how it is, this is just the way it is, which is called '*tathātā*' or '*suchness*.' It's just things are just like this. There is no way they could be otherwise. It's just the way it is, just like this. This is *tathātā*. This is a very important word. You ought to try very hard to remember it – *tathātā* – things are just like this. It's just like this.

This word can come in different forms, the form *tathā* or *tathātā* or *tathādā*. And there are others like *avitathātā*. But the meaning of all these words is it's just like this. Things aren't other than this, they're not different or otherwise. They're just such. They're merely like this. This is the heart of *idappaccayatā*. To really penetrate to the heart of *idappaccayatā* is to see that things are just like this. They're merely *tathātā*.

One who has realized, who has awakened to the reality of *tathātā*, is called '*tathāgata*,' the one who has realized or attained to, the one who has awakened to *tathātā*. This is a name for all the Arahants. All the Arahants are called '*tathāgata*,' those who have realized *tathātā*. And then the Buddha is chief, is the head of all the *tathāgatas*, the supreme Arahant. But the word *tathāgata* applies to all the Arahants, all those who have realized the fact of suchness, of *tathātā*.

By realizing *tathātā*, then one is beyond the influence of *idappaccayatā*. In penetrating to the very heart of *idappaccayatā* and seeing that things are just like this, then one is beyond the power and influence of *idappaccayatā*. This means nibbanā. But we have a special word for this condition for the mind that is beyond the power of *idappaccayatā*, that's not touched or concocted by *idappaccayatā*. We call this

'*atammayatā*.' Please remember this word. This is the summit, the conclusion of realizing Dhamma through these insights into Dhamma. This is the conclusion. It ends with the mind that is *atammayatā*, so, please remember it. Literally this word means unable to be concocted by that condition, that when the mind cannot be concocted, affected, influenced by any condition, by anything. That's nibbanā. That's what we call *atammayatā*.

It helps to study this word a little more carefully. 'A' means not, 'tam' means that or this, 'maya' means made of or made out of, made up of, and 'tā' means the state of being or the conditions. So *atammayatā* means not being made up by means of that, not being made up by that, which means that there's no condition, no cause, no phenomena, especially *idappaccayatā* that can influence, that can concoct, that can affect the mind. The mind is beyond, is above the power of anything to concoct it.

So now we are beyond the power of *idappaccayatā* to affect or concoct us in any way. There is only *atammayatā*. This is nibbanā and the story is finished.

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Transcribed by Bill Weir (arizonahandbook@yahoo.com) in October, 2024

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