

Fundamental Knowledge of Abhidhamma

(Chapter-VI) Lesson – 42 –

Great Essentials and Derived Matters

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Suggested reading P.234 – to - 242

– Introduction to the Compendium Of Matter –

– The five chapters of the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha* analyzed the first two ultimate realities – Consciousness (*Citta*) and Mental factors (*Cetasikas*) – with their permutations, with the occurrence of consciousness in cognitive processes and at rebirth, with the plane of existence, and with the classification of **kamma** and its result.

- ❖ Enumerate the kinds of material phenomena;
- ❖ Explain the principles by which they are classified;
- ❖ their causes or means of origination,
- ❖ Their organization into groups, and
- ❖ Their modes of occurrence.
- ❖ Conclude the chapter with a brief look at the fourth ultimate reality, the unconditioned element, Nibbāna.

—Five Sections—

- 1) *Rūpa-samuddesa* – the Enumeration of material phenomena
 - 2) *Rūpa-vibhāga* – the Classification of matter
 - 3) *Rūpa-samuṭṭānanaya* – the Origination of matter
 - 4) *Rūpa-kalāpayojana* – the Grouping of material phenomena
 - 5) *Rūpa-ppapavattikkama* – the Occurrence of material phenomena
- Nibbāna* (as the conclusion of four ultimate realities)

Two General categories of Matter

- (1) **Great Essentials** (*Mahābhūta*) – 4 (Earth, Water, Fire, and Air)
- **Fundamental (inseparable) constituents of matters**
 - **enter into the composition of all material substances)**

(2) **Derived Matter** (*Upādārūpa*) – 24

The material phenomena derived from,
dependent upon, the four great essentials.

- The material phenomena do not occur singly,
but in combinations or group.)

(The **great essentials** may be compared to the **earth**,
the **derivative phenomena** to **trees and shrubs**
that grow in dependence on the earth.)

Great Essentials (*Mahābhūta*) – 4

The great essentials are called elements (*dhbātu*)

– in the sense that they bear their own natures (*Attano sabhāvaṃ dhāretīti*)

1. **Earth element** (*pathavī-dhātu*) – serves as a support or foundation for the coexisting material phenomena, like the earth.

Characteristic (of) – hardness / (softness)

Function – acting as a foundation

Manifestation – as receiving

Proximate cause – the other three great essentials.

2. **Water element** (*āpo-dhātu*) – (fluidity) the material factor that makes different particles of matter cohere, thereby preventing them from being scattered about .

Abhidhamma holds that **unlike the other three great essentials,**
the water element cannot be physically sensed
but must be known inferentially from the cohesion of observed matter.

Characteristic (of) – trickling / or oozing

Function – to intensify the coexisting material states

Manifestation – as the holding together

(or) cohesion of material phenomena

Proximate cause – the other three great essentials.

3. Fire element (*tejo-dhātu*) –

Both heat and cold are modes in which the fire element is experienced.

Characteristic (of) – heat / (cold)

Function – to mature or ripen other three material phenomena

Manifestation – as continuous supply of softness
(or) cohesion of material phenomena

Proximate cause – the other three great essentials.

4. **Air element** (*vāyo-dhātu*) – the principle of motion and pressure.
(It is experienced as tangible pressure.)

Characteristic (of) – distension (*Vitthambana*)

Function – to cause motion in the other material phenomena

Manifestation – as conveyance to other place

(or) cohesion of material phenomena

Proximate cause – the other three great essentials.

Taken together, the four great essentials are **founded upon** the earth element, **held together** by the water element, **maintained** by the fire element, and **distended** by the air element.

Derived Matter (*Upādā-rūpa*) - 24

- (2) Sensitive Phenomena – 5
- (3) Objective Phenomena – 7 (4)
- (4) Sexual Phenomena – 2
- (5) Heart-base – 1
- (6) Life Phenomenon – 1
- (7) Nutritional Phenomenon – 1
- (8) Limiting Phenomenon – 1
- (9) Communication Phenomena – 2
- (10) Mutable Phenomena – 5 (3)
- (11) Characteristics of Matter – 4

Great Essentials
(*Mahābhūta*) – 4
= (14) ⁺



Concretely Produced Matter
(*Nippahanna-rūpa*) - 18

= (10)



Non-concretely Produced Matter
(*Anippahanna-rūpa*) - 10

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(2) Sensitive Phenomena (*Pasāda-rūpa*) – 5

Five types of matter located in each of five sense organs

The sensitivity (*Pasāda-rūpa*) is to be distinguished from the gross sense organ (which functions as its support).

Eye = the composite eye (*Sasambhāra-cakkhu*),

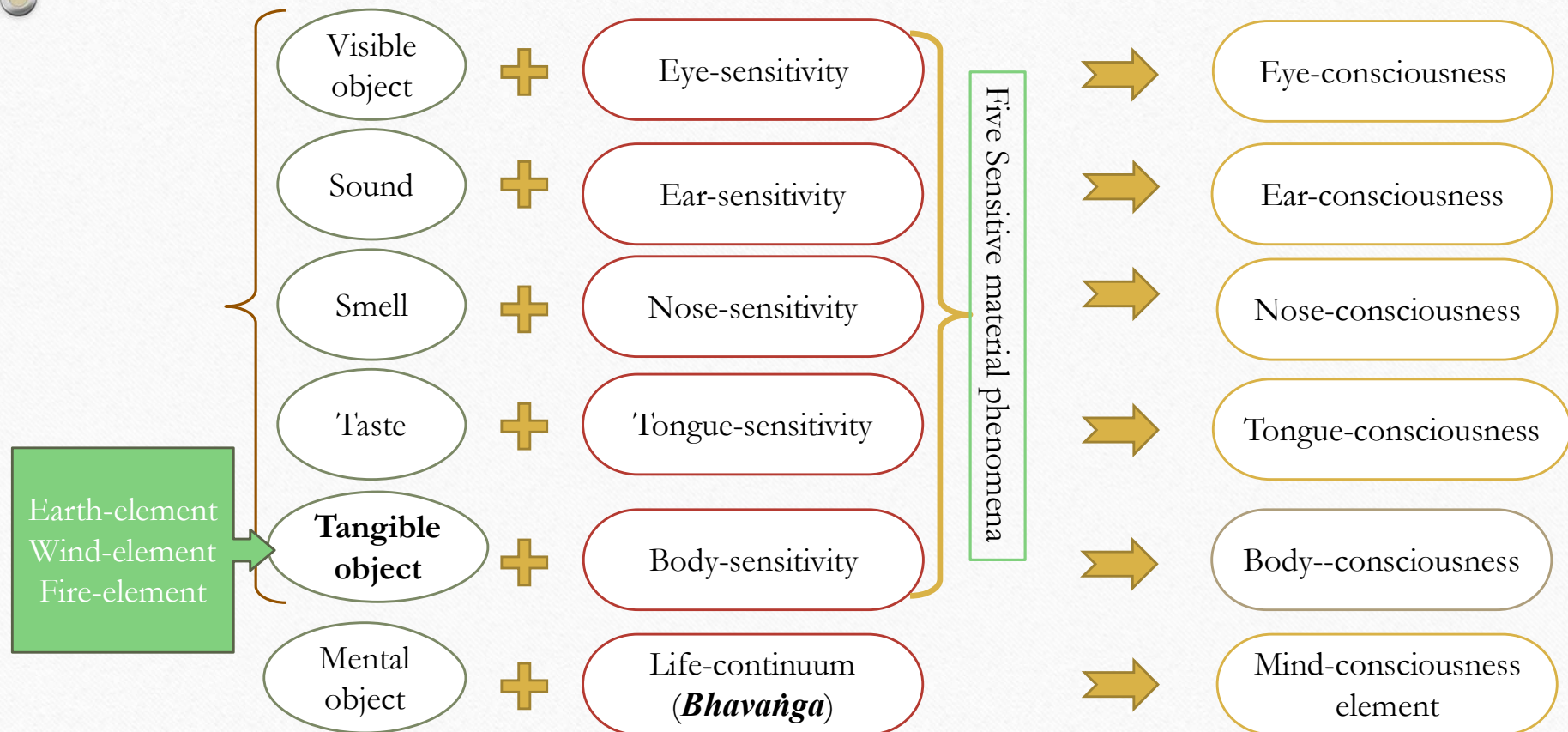
- A compound of various material phenomena

{ Among these is eye-sensitivity (*Cakkhu-pasada*),

the sensitive substance in the retina that registers light and colour and serve as a physical base and door for eye-consciousness }

Five Sensitive Phenomena (*Pasāda-rūpa*) –

1. **Eye-sensitivity** (*Cakkhu-pasada*), in the **retina** that registers light and colour and serve as a physical base and door for eye-consciousness
2. **Ear-sensitivity** (*Sota-pasada*),
It is to be found inside the ear-hole, “in the place shaped like a finger-stall and surrounded by fine brown hairs”; it is the sensitive substance that registers sounds and serves as a physical base and door for ear-consciousness.
3. **Nose-sensitivity** (*Ghāna-pasada*), → It is to be found inside the nasal orifice, as the substance that registers smell.
4. **Tongue-sensitivity** (*Jīvhā-pasada*), → It is to be found diffused over the tongue, serving to register tastes.
5. **Body-sensitivity** (*Kāya-pasada*), It extends all over the organic body “like a liquid that soaks a layer of cotton,” and serves to register tractile sensations.



The 28 Material phenomena – The four Great essentials (*Mahābhāta*) – 4 +
 Derived material phenomena (*Upādārūpa*) – 24 = 28

1) The Objects of Five-door consciousnesses (*Paññca-dvārika-cittas*)

The five doors – the five sense objects

1- (*Cakkhu-dvārika-cittas*) ... F. *E*. Rc. I . D . J . J . J . J . J . J . J . Rg. Rg.....
The consciousnesses of eye-door - 46 (Present **Visible form object**)

2- (*Sota-dvārika-cittas*) ... F. *E*. Rc. I . D . J . J . J . J . J . J . J . Rg. Rg.....
The consciousnesses of ear-door - 46 (Present **Sound object**)

3- (*Ghāna-dvārika-cittas*) ... F. *E*. Rc. I . D . J . J . J . J . J . J . J . Rg. Rg.....
The consciousnesses of nose-door - 46 (Present **Smell object**)

4- (*Jivhā-dvārika-cittas*) ... F. *E*. Rc. I . D . J . J . J . J . J . J . J . Rg. Rg.....
The consciousnesses of tongue-door - 46 (Present **Taste object**)

5- (*Kāya-dvārika-cittas*) ... F. *E*. Rc. I . D . J . J . J . J . J . J . J . Rg. Rg.....
The consciousnesses of body-door - 46 (Present **Tangible object**)

6- The triple Mind element – 3 (Present **five-sense-objects**)

(3) Objective Phenomena (*Pasāda-rūpa*) – 7 (4)

The Five sense fields which serve as the objective supports for the corresponding types of sense consciousness.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|-----|
| (1) <i>Rūpaṃ</i> | (visible form object) - 1 | } | = 4 |
| (2) <i>Saddo</i> | (sound object) - 1 | | |
| (3) <i>Gandho</i> | (smell object) - 1 | | |
| (4) <i>Rasso</i> | (taste object) - 1 | | |
| (5) <i>Potthabbam</i> | (tangible object) – 3 elements | | |

The tangible object is constituted by three of the great essentials:

Earth element (*pathavī-dhātu*) – (experienced as hardness or softness),

Fire element (*tejo-dhātu*) – (experienced as heat or cold), and

Air element (*vāyo-dhātu*) – (experienced as pressure).

The **water element** (*āpo-dhātu*) – is not included in the tangible object.

(4) Sexual Phenomena (*Bhāva-rūpa*) – 2

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1) Femininity (*Itthattam*) (*Itthindriyam* - the faculty of femininity) –

Characteristic (of) – female sex

Function – to show the femininity

Manifestation – as the reason for the mark, sign, work, and ways of the **female**

Proximate cause – the primary elements

2) Masculinity (*Purisattam*) (*Purisindriyam* - the faculty of masculinity –

Characteristic (of) – male sex

Function – to show the masculinity

Manifestation – as the reason for the mark, sign, work, and ways of the **male**

Proximate cause – the primary elements

The sexual phenomena also extend all over the organic body
like the **Body-sensitivity** (*Kāya-pasada*)

(5) Heart Phenomenon (*Hadaya-rūpa*) – 1

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Heart-base (*Hadayavatthu*) –

It is to be found in dependence on the blood inside the heart, and
- is **assisted** by the four great essentials and **maintained** by the life faculty.

In the canonical *Abhidhamma* the heart-base is not expressly mentioned.

Paṭṭhāna –“ that matter in dependence on which the mind element and
mind-consciousness element occur”.

The commentaries specify “that matter” to be the heart-base (*Hadaya-vatthu*),
a cavity situated within the physical heart.

Characteristic (of) – being the material support for
the mind element and the-consciousness element

Function – to uphold these elements

Manifestation – as the carrying of these elements

Proximate cause – the primary elements

(6) Life phenomenon (*Jīvita-rūpa*) – 1

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Life faculty (*Jīvitindriya*) – the material counterpart of the mental life faculty

Characteristic (of) – maintaining the co-existent kinds of matter
at the moment of their present.

Function – to make them occur

Manifestation – as the establishment of their presence

Proximate cause – the four great essentials that are to be maintained

Why Faculty (*indriya*)? - Life, or vitality is called a faculty
because it has a dominating influence over its adjuncts.

(7) **Edible food** (*Kabaḷīkārāhāra*) – 1

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Nutriment (*āhāra*) –

- which sustains by acting as a strong supporting condition

Characteristic (of) – nutritive essence (*ojā*)

(- the nutritional substance contained in gross edible food.)

Function – to sustain the physical body

Manifestation – as the fortifying of the body

Proximate cause – the gross edible food, which is the base of nutritive essence

Four types of **nutriment** (*āhāra*) –

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(1) Edible food

(2) contact (3) mental volition (4) consciousness

Material nutriment

-sustains material phenomena of fourfold origination in the body

Three mental nutriments

- Sustain all their co-nascent mental and material phenomena

(8) Limiting phenomenon (*Pariccheda-rūpa*) – 1

The space element (*Ākāśadhātu*) –

Space – (in *Abhidhamma*) is the void region
that delimit and separates objects and groups of material phenomena,
enabling them to be perceived as distinct.

Characteristic (of) – delimiting matter

Function – to display the boundaries of matter

Manifestation – as the confines of matter, or as the state of gaps and apertures

Proximate cause – the matter delimited

Group (8) to (11) – Ten types of matters are “non-concretely produced matter”
(*Anipphanna-rūpa*)

(9) Intimating / Communicating phenomena (*Viññatti-rūpa*) – 2

The **intimation**(*Viññatti*) – that by means of which one communicates one's ideas, feelings, and attitudes to another.

Two means of intimation: **bodily** and **vocal**.

The **bodily intimation**(*Kāya-viññatti*) –

a special modification in the consciousness-originated **air element**
which causes the body to move in ways that reveal one's intentions.

The **vocal intimation**(*Vacī-viññatti*) – a special modification in the consciousness-originated **earth element** which issues in speech by which one reveals one's intentions.

Characteristic (of) – (modification)

Function – (of) displaying intention

Manifestation – as the cause of bodily movement / of verbal expression (respectively)

Proximate cause – (respectively) the air element and the earth element
born of consciousness

(10) Mutable phenomena (*Vikāra-rūpa*) – 5 (3)

– this includes the two types of intimation and three other modes of phenomena:
 Lightness(*lahutā*), Malleability(*mudutā*), and Wioldiness (*kammaññatā*)

(1) The lightness (*Kāyassa-lahutā*) –

Characteristic (of) – non-sluggishness

Function – to dispel heaviness in matter

Manifestation – as light transformability

Proximate cause – light matter

(2) The malleability (*Kāyassa-mudutā*) –

Characteristic (of) – non-rigidity

Function – to dispel rigidity in matter

Manifestation – as non-opposition to any kind of action

Proximate cause – malleable matter

(3) The wioldiness (*Kāyassa-kammaññatā*) –

Characteristic (of) – wioldiness (that is favorable to bodily action)

Function – to dispel unwioldiness

Manifestation – as non-weakness

Proximate cause – wioldy matter

(11) Characteristics of phenomena (*Lakkhaṇa-rūpa*) – 4

– this includes the four types of phenomena:

(1) Production (*upacaya*), (2) continuity (*santati*),

-both terms for the genesis, arising, or birth (*jāti*)

They differ in that **production** is the first arising of a material process,
the initial launching or setting up of the process,
while **continuity** is the repeated genesis of material phenomena in the same material process

(3) decay (*jaratā*), and (4) impermanence (*aniccatā*).

(1) The Production (*upacaya*),–

Characteristic (of) – setting up

Function – to make material instances emerge
for the first time

Manifestation – as launching or as the complete state

Proximate cause – matter produced

(2) The continuity (*santati*),

Characteristic (of) – occurrence

Function – to anchor

Manifestation – as non-interruption

Proximate cause – matter to be anchored

Aspiration & Sharing Merit

*Iminā Puññakammena mā me bālasamāgamo
Sataṃ samāgamo hotu yāva Nibbānappatiyā
-Idaṃ me puññaṃ āsavakkhayā'vahaṃ hotu.
-Idaṃ me puññaṃ Nibbānassa paccayo hotu.
.....
Mama puññabhāgaṃ sabbasattānaṃ bhājemi.
Te sabbe me samaṃ puññbhāgaṃ labhantu.
.....*

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu

By this action of merit,May I not be associated with fools!,

May I be associated with the wise until the attainment of Nibbāna.

May my (this) merit bring about the cessation of taints (as a result)!

May my (this) merit be the condition for (the achievement of) Nibbāna.

I share my portion of merits with all beings. May all of them achieve my portion of merit evenly.

Well-done Well-done Well-done

