CHAPTER-3
BUDDHISM AND ITS PHILOSOPHY

Gautama Buddha is regarded as the founder of Buddhism. The term Buddha means enlightened one. The basic teaching of Buddhism was taught by Gautama Buddha. Buddhism is considered as a system, which mainly based on ethical principle of life and moral values. It tries to seek the way to escape human being from suffering. It is purely a humanistic religion. Its sole concern was the liberation of man from suffering. Buddhism does not believe in God as the most powerful supreme creator of this universe. There is no place of theism in Buddhism. The idea of God as ruling over the destiny of mankind is rejected in Buddhism. The Buddhist philosophy dealt with the problem of life and aims for finding its solution. Buddhism is an independent major religion of the world, originated from India. In its inception, it started as a reform movement within the Hinduism protesting against some of its features. Gautama Buddha didn’t think he was establishing a new religion. He was a Hindu by birth and died as a Hindu (Suda, 1978: 142). There are many common features in both Buddhism and Hinduism. Buddhism also holds that the universe is samsāra, a stream without an end. Buddhism is the only religion originated from India, which spread far beyond the boundaries of India. Buddhism crossed over the boundaries of India by virtue of its intrinsic vitality and ethical values.

3.1 ORIGIN OF BUDDHISM

As the six century being a cardinal epoch in the history of world, it was mark as a spiritual unrest and intellectual turmoil in many countries and led to different movement for religious reformation and restructuring. Many religious leaders came into existence and worked upon their inheritance, developed new point of new vision and view and establish new religious order, which became a turning point in the history of human civilization and thought. Gautama Buddha was also one of the great pioneers of the era, who utilized the Hindu inheritance to restructure some of its ideologies and faith, when the sacrifice and rituals of the Vedas dominated the
atmosphere. Diversities and contradictions were being encouraged and such encouragement led to the social unrest.

Buddhism originated and developed in India. Buddhism developed as a religion based on the teaching of an historic individual Siddhartha Gautama, who lived in the sixth century BC in north-eastern India. Buddhism emerged as movement of reformation with a new emphasis. It is certainly an independent religion and philosophical system. However, it was immensely influenced by the social and religious environment in which it developed. There were social and religious changes in central India at the time of Buddha. With the anti-Brahmanic attitude he tried to resolve the "...conflict between religious and philosophical views of the Brahmanic and non-Brahmanic teachers. It was for Buddha to remove this anomaly between the philosophy of life and practice prevalent in the society" (Pathak, 1988: 1). The sixth century was marked as an outstanding for the spiritual unrest and intellectual turmoil. It was an era of religious reformation. G. C. Pande points out that "... in the period of the Philosophers in China and in the age of the sophists in Greece, there was a remarkable intellectual and religious ferment in India in this period. It was, as it were, an age of enlightenment for the human race" (Pande, 1957: 310). The period was marked by the rise of numerous small republics and kingdoms. This period also saw the rise of tyranny of the upper castes and exploitation of the people belonging to the lower castes. Brāhmaṇas (the priestly class) and Kshatriyas (the rulers and warriors) did not allow the people belonging to lower castes or the Sudras to have equal participation in the society. At that time “The Brāhmaṇas formed a proud caste in this epoch and placed before themselves the ideal of a priest’s and teacher’s life with its pursuit of Vedic study and the performance of sacrifices” (Pande, 1957: 315). The Kshatriyas were considered as the ruling and superior class. Eventually the system became more specialized and produced the many divisions that make up the caste system today. A member of one class was usually not allowed to marry or even eat with someone from another class. This period also saw a rift developing between the Brāhmaṇas on one hand and the Kshatriyas on the other. The rising popularity and aspirations of the Brāhmin priests began to collide with the authority of the
Kshatriyas, who formed the ruling class of each kingdom or republic. The Kshatriyas were alarmed by the rising power of the Brāhmīns, but they could not do much as they required the services of the Brāhmaṇas in all religious rituals and state occasions. The rise of Buddhism and Jainism during this period was a natural outcome to counter the threat of the Brāhmanical Hindu order of superior over others. The Buddha’s impression on Brāhmaṇas and Veda is “... that the original Brāhmaṇas were good men and the Veda (originally) true doctrine but that both had become corrupted and needed to be completely reformed for example, one should become a Brāhmaṇ by virtue, not by hereditary; the Brāhmaṇs had become mere repeaters of texts, not creative thinkers or meditators, since the Veda had been compiled” (Warder, 1980: 31). However, it is noteworthy to point out that “Buddhist dharma was drawn from the traditions of contemporaneous Brāhmanism, a metaphysical system, which has dominated Indian thought before and after the brief flourishing of Buddhism in its native country, eventually becoming known as Hinduism” (Barnes, 1995: 166-67).

Gradually, Buddhism becomes a religion of kindness, humanity and equality. It did not start as a new and independent religion from its inception. It is consider an offshoot of ancient Hinduism. The Buddha refused to acquiesce in the Vedic ceremonials and the culture of sacrificial rituals. In India, during the beginning of the sixth century B. C., the elaboration of the Brāhmanic tradition of sacrifices accompanied with the killing of hundreds of victims had already run a long course growing into a highly complex system of ritualism. Such kind of violent activities were believed, if rightly performed, as able to secure wealth, health, long span of life and strength, the good will and warm grace of Gods and happiness, even after death. There was a strong belief within the Brāhmanism that the cult of sacrifices takes one across to the heavenly world. Buddha was against the cruel slaying of animals in the sacrifices, recognition of the authority of the Brāhmaṇas, or compliance with the caste-system. The Buddha stood up as a rock to stop the flow of religion in order to direct the faiths of the people along channels of his own. The Buddha was accepted as a great religious leader, who reclaimed Hindus from sanguinary rite and erroneous
practices and purified their religion of numerous abuses, which had crept into it. He started preaching that religious truths lay, not in the sacrifices, not in the Vedas, which prescribed bloodshed sacrifices, not in the worship of many deities of the Brāhmānic tradition, not in the observance of caste and class rules. The performance of the sacrifices as religious ritual gives no everlasting results, it brings efficacious only for a short time leading to temporary happiness. It could not mean eternal peace and happiness of mind. It may sometimes be a source of unhappiness and eternal disturbance. Buddha condemns the act of sacrifices in a general way. According to Buddha, ritual and sacrifices do not have a significant role to play in the moral and psychological development of human character. It is the strong belief of the historian that Buddhism originated as reaction to Brāhmānic. However, “It is now generally believed that primitive Buddhism represents a new expansion, not against, but within Brāhmānic. The canonical literature, no doubt, now and again criticizes Brāhmānic, but mostly on its ritualistic side” (Hariyanna, 1995: 72).

In the sixth century B.C., there was socio-economic as well as political changes taken place. Not only the socio-economic change but also socio-economic disparity has also been come into existence. However, “There was a great socio-economic disparity in the then Brāhmāncal religious matters connected with sacrificial rites and ritualistic deed” (Vyas, 2000: 52). The experience of social change and suffering is connected with the origin and birth of Buddhism. From the prehistoric times in India, numerous races and cultural communities have met. They have been struggled and mingled in the long history of Indian culture, which has progressed through the synthesis of diverse conflicts (Pande, 1957: iv). The main intention of Buddha was to bring about a reformation in religious practices and a return to the basic principles. The objective of the Buddha was to establish the development of a new type of free man, free prejudices crossing the racial caste barriers by culminating the self-culture.

Gautama Buddha was born in a royal Hindu family. The date his birth remains difficult to conclude exactly, due to lack of accurate records of early Indian history. Different contemporary scholars in Asia and West have suggested differently birthdate of the Buddha. Hiriyanna mentioned that “The date of his birth is now
generally taken as 563 B.C. He is represented as a greatly accomplished prince”
(Hiriyanna, 1995: 71). He was born in Lumbini forest now in Nepal. He was the
prince of the Sakya tribe. He started with a pessimistic outlook of the world. His heart
was overflowed with purest emotion on seeing that human life was essentially fraught
with misery and pain (Sharma, 1987: 69). He was moved by the sight of things, which
underlined the superficial momentary glow of sensual pleasure, which includes the
misery of old age, sickness, disease and death, which afflict mankind. He brought
within himself a faint ray of hope and urged him to take upon himself a life ascetic
renunciation. He rejected his luxurious worldly ways for the life of an ascetic
(Barnes, 1995: 1). He renounced every material thing including wife, son and
princely life to seek a remedy for men’s ill. After six years rigorous religious
austerities, he attained the perfect enlightenment as he sat meditating under a tree near
Gaya, dispelling the dark cloud of ignorance and conquering evil thought. He became
a great lover of mankind and started preaching the truth without distinction of caste,
creed and colour with a view to remove ignorance and evil, which darkened human
existence. He spent the rest of his life continuing the work of spreading among the
people the message of truth, instead of remaining content with his personal
illumination and self sufficiency. “Buddha spent a life prolonged over forty-five years
in traveling from place to place and preaching the doctrine to all who would listen”
(Dasgupta, 1957: 81). Going to be pointed out the ethical relevance of Buddhism,
Prof. N J Vyas mentions that “Historically, the origin and vision of Buddhist thought
aimed at providing justice and order in the ethical realm of man” (Vyas, 2000: 52).
Thus, Buddhism came into exist as a moral and spiritual concerns to relieve the
misery of mankind. The followers of the Buddha were encouraged to renounce
secular life and became monks spreading the knowledge and message of truth taught
by the Buddha.

3.2 PROPAGATION OF BUDDHISM

Buddhism was at first a religion practiced by a limited group of people in a small
area, but later it spread over a very large portion of India and even across many other
parts of Asia. Buddhism become a world religion and makes its significance to more
than just a limited numbers of tribes or people. Buddha’s enlightenment is one of the main qualities that enabled it to become a world religion spreading across the boundary of the land, where it originated. The personality of the Buddha is also the main reason for the success of propagating Buddhism. N. Dutt writes that “The commanding personality of Buddha, his self-sacrifice, the strength of his character, his spiritual attainments, his super-sensual vision, and the occasional manifestations of miraculous powers served in a great degree to convince the people of his spiritual greatness and made them attach importance to his works” (Dutt, 1925: 27). In the similar manner, Keith point out that “The founder of the Buddhism must rank as one of the most commanding personalities ever produced by the eastern world” (Keith, 1923: 147). The character and personality of Buddha’s immediate disciples was also a powerful factor in the propagation of Buddhism. The Buddha’s way of preaching the doctrine to all who were willing to listen led to its larger expansion. His main task was “. . . to make available to all men the universal principles of truth, which the Brahman of his day considered their monopoly, and Buddhism was from the first a message for all mankind” (Humphreys, 1954: 60). As N. Dutt says, “The success of the methods employed by the Buddhists for spreading their religion depended upon the following factors” (Dutt, 1925: 46-7):

1) The easiness with which the religion could be followed
2) The tolerant spirit shown to converts
3) The tenacity of the preachers in persuasion
4) Power of disputation
5) Appealing way of preaching

Buddhism attracted the attention of powerful rulers, who wished to improve their spiritual status by performing good deeds. King Asoka was the first royal patron of Buddhism. He became a true follower of Buddha and wanted to spread Buddhism among his own subjects and among people outside his kingdom. He forsook violence as a means of unification and pledged to consolidate his rule through the non-violent teaching of the Buddha. It can be said that Buddhism came to occupy the prominent
position in India and outside India because of his efforts. Buddhism was propagated through:

1) Central Asia and China
2) Korea
3) Japan
4) Tibet
5) Ladakh
6) Mongolia
7) Nepal
8) Ceylon
9) Burma
10) Malay Peninsula
11) Saim (Thailand)
12) Kambuja (Cambodia)
13) Campa (Vietnam)
14) Indonesia

3.3 THEORY OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION

The theory of dependent origination is considered as the core of all the principles of Buddhism. It is the most important and basic cornerstone of Buddhism. It is the key insight upon which the entire teaching of Buddha rests. According to Buddha, all the phenomena of the universe are interconnected by relationships of mutual causality. Everything comes into being in dependence upon causes and conditions, abide due to causes and conditions, and eventually pass away due to causes and conditions. There is no ultimate ground or primordial cause, but a network of causes and conditions. The basis of dependent origination is that life or the world is built on a set of relations, in which the arising and cessation of factors depend on some other factors which condition them. The theory of dependent origination means that all phenomena arise as the result of conditions and cease when those conditions change. It emphasizes that all phenomena in this universe are relative, conditioned states and
do not arise independently of supportive conditions. A phenomenon arises because of a combination of conditions which are present to support its arising. And the phenomenon will cease when the conditions and components supporting its arising change and no longer sustain it. The presence of these supportive conditions, in turn, depends on other factors for their arising, sustenance and disappearance. According to the Buddha “When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases” (Bodhi, 2000: 575). The theory of dependent origination is also related with the concern of the doctrine of causation. The doctrine of causation is the corollary of the theory of dependent origination. The theory of dependent origination concerns that if this is, then that comes to be. “Of all the gems of Buddhist thought the doctrine of causation is the excellent gem. The doctrine of causation as evaluated by the Buddhist philosophers of our period seems to be a direct outcome of their doctrine of universal momentariness. Causality, reality, efficiency and momentariness are interchangeable term in this system” (Joshi, 1967: 252). Though “Everything is momentary; the cause also is momentary; it dies giving rise to the effect. The cause is the material cause also. It must have perished before the effect born; for so long as it exists, there is no effect” (Raju, 1985: 180). As Chatterjee and Datta writes “There is a spontaneous and universal law of causation, which conditions the appearance of all events, mental and physical. This law works automatically without the help of any conscious guide. In accordance with it, whenever a particular event (the cause) appears, it is followed by another particular event (the effect). On getting the cause, the effect arises. The existence of everything is conditional, dependent on a cause. Nothing happens fortuitously or by chance. This is called the theory of dependent origination” (Chatterjee and Datta, 1984: 133). Everything depends on some conditions. Everything has causes. There is no permanent substratum of existence. Nothing can exist without a cause, nor does it perish without leaving some effect. L. M. Joshi defines, “Existence means efficiency; this efficiency is nothing but the capacity to produce or cause something. This something is nothing but the point-instant, the efficient moment, cause by the proceeding efficient moment. The universe is a moving show of these momentary entities that are causes themselves. Whatsoever
exists is a cause, cause and existence are synonymous” (Joshi, 1967: 252-53). Everything is changing and can never be the same for even two consecutive moments. Staying, growth, decay and destruction are the characteristic of origination. All these characteristic of origination are belong to every object of the universe. They appear or exist throughout the three divisions of time- past, present and future. The theory of dependent origination depends on past, present and future, which are connected in lifetime. Ignorance and action in the past give birth to the present; the consequences of past actions are thus experienced in the present. The process causes our vexation due to desire and clinging in the present life, while transmigration, the cyclical process of death and rebirth or samsāra delivers us to births and sufferings in future lives.

According to Buddhism, the world is viewed as a dynamic and ever changing system of cause and effect. All that exists passes through the cycle of existence, birth, growth, decay and death. A cause produces something that is effect. Cause and effect cannot exist concurrently or at the same time. The simultaneous existence of cause and effect cannot be made possible. The theory of dependent origination is a functional dependence or interdependence. “The effect appears immediately after the existence of the cause, hence this existence itself may be called the operation or function; the dependence of the effect on the cause, or the need that an effect has of the cause, consists in the fact that the effect comes into existence immediately after the cause” (Joshi, 1967: 254). The fundamental principle at work in dependent origination is thus that of cause and effect.

The theory of dependent origination is contained in the second of the four noble truths. It has its basis in the assumption that if there is a cause of everything, then there must be a cause of suffering, nothing arises out of nothing. Though, our feelings, thoughts, and acts are determined by ignorance. “This false assumption about the true essence of reality is the cause of all suffering that affect our lives; ignorance is the main cause out of which false desire springs” (Nakamura, 1976: 14). “The fact of existence is the law of change. Life is a process of flow and he, who clings to any form, however, splendid, will suffer if the flow is arrested. So Buddhism
does not believe anything to be permanent. Every moment all objects of the world are sorrow, dissolution and destruction” (Pathak, 1988: 20).

The second noble truth aims at, implicitly though, proving the dependent existence of things and phenomena. A thing originates from another thing by way of the dependence of the former on the later. Everything in this world is ever changing and can never be the same for even two consecutive moments. According to Buddhism, the existence and the origination of a thing are always subject to a certain condition and thus, a thing has only a conditional existence. And all are interdependent and originate in mutual interdependence. According to Buddhism, permanent or absolute existence is an illusion and “What exist is always acting, always moving; it is an illusion that a thing exists placidly, that it exists without acting; what does not act, does not exist; action is motion, this motion itself is causation” (Joshi, 1967: 253). Substance and self, which elsewhere in Indian philosophy are taken as permanent entities, have received scanty attention of the Buddhist for the purpose of philosophy. Buddha’s theory of dependent origination is only yet another version of the “middle path” – this time between absolutism and nihilism or annihilationism. Buddha believed that both extremes are equality unreal. What is real is the “becoming”, the process, which disallows either an end or a beginning. (Bibhu and Minakshi, 1998: 101).

Dependent origination is the Middle Way between the extremes of existence and non-existence. The view of existence, or “eternalism” imagines that fixed entities, independent of conditions and immune from change, can be found underlying the phenomena which do change. The view of non-existence, or “annihilationism,” imagines there is no continuity at all within change and the entities which do arise will eventually vanish completely without a trace. Dependent origination is the Middle Way, which cuts through those views by pointing out the ceaseless interplay of causes and conditions, which is the process of becoming, rather than the eternalism of being or the nihilism of non-being. The Middle Way points out that while there are no fixed entities, there is a flow of continuity within the process of change. The extreme of existence is an attempt to attribute intrinsic entities to the flow of causes
and conditions. It does not see the interdependence, flux and relativity of all phenomena. In the end it results in an absolutism which fixes things in rigid categories in defiance of the actual contingency of life. From this rigidity springs all kinds of evils, such as classism, racism, nationalism and religious fundamentalism. Compassion is effectively banished through the projection of fixed boundaries of self and other upon the dynamic flow and interdependence of the life process. Finally, the eternalistic view assumes that there is a self, which is immutable and therefore immune to the law of cause and effect. The extreme of non-existence is a refusal to accept any kind of meaning or value, since it assumes there are no entities of any kind to have any regard for. Life is reduced to chaos, absurdity or illusion. Ultimately, it is the negation of life itself; which is very different from the Buddha's liberation from the illusion of self. According to the Buddha, selfish craving is the cause of suffering, not life itself. In Buddhism, the goal is to become liberated from the delusion of self through the cultivation of the eightfold path. Nihilism only leads to irresponsible despair and the denial of the truth and meaning of causality. It assumes that there is no continuity at all within the flow of conditions and therefore negates the law of cause and effect. Dependent origination, then, is the teaching that things do have a provisional (though not intrinsic) existence based on causes and conditions. Therefore, one who is following the Middle Way will think in terms of causes and conditions, and not existence or non-existence. For the follower of the Middle Way, there are no longer any immutable categories or boundaries, nor is there any question of absolute identity or absolute difference between entities. Dependent origination is the awareness of cause and effect and the interdependence of all things which gives rise to an authentic sense of responsibility, genuine love and compassion.

The third noble truth shows the cessation of suffering. Suffering is Samsāra; and cessation of suffering means the attainment of nirvāṇa, free from the cycle of birth and death. Buddhism is concerned with the relative character of the existence of things. The theory of dependent origination is samsāra, when we viewed from the standpoint of relativity. And it is also nirvāṇa, when we viewed from the standpoint of reality. Nirvāṇa, which is the goal of Buddhism, exists because of the prior
existence of Samsāra. Buddhism is essentially a teaching of relationship. Nothing exists by itself, apart from something else. The philosophy of Buddhism considered relativity as the very nature of phenomenal existence. The existence of a thing is relative, since all phenomenal things hang between the real and the unreal. It is relative in the sense that a thing comes into being in dependence on the accidental existence of another, and it continues to exist till that time, when it allows yet another thing take its place.

The Buddha wished to show the specific causes and conditions which bind people to an existence of suffering, and through understanding those causes, how to change them. Going to describe the cyclic process it is said that “Change being the essence of Buddhist philosophy, the Buddhist interprets human life in terms of a cyclic process involving birth, death and rebirth. There is suffering because there is birth, there is birth because there is the will to be born; the will to be born follows from the desire to cling to the objects around one; the desire to cling to the objects is because of the desire to enjoy; the desire to enjoy is due to sense-experience; the sense-experience is due to sense-object contact, which again is due to the presence of the six sense organs.” (Bibhu & Minakshi, 1998: 102). According to the Buddha, “the life of an ordinary man, who is bereft of the knowledge of absolute, is revolving wheel, which can be divided into twelve parts connected by the laws of dependent origination” (Stcherbatsky, 1932: 878). To this end, the Buddha expounded the twelvefold chain of dependent origination, which account for the continuity of existence birth after birth. Twelvefold chain of dependent Originsations is the appropriate analysis of the causes of human sufferings and includes the best answers for us to attain the paths to remove our sufferings and reach the truth.

1) Ignorance (avidyā)
2) Impression of karmic forces (samskāra)
3) Embryonic consciousness (vijñāna)
4) Psycho-physical organism (nāmarūpa)
5) Six sense organs include mind (sadbhayatana)
6) Sense object contact (sparsa)
7) Sense experience (vedana)
8) Desire and thirsty for enjoyment (trsna)
9) Clinging to the enjoyment (upadana)
10) Will to be born (bhava)
11) Birth or rebirth (jati)
12) Old age and death (jarâ-marana) (Sharma, 1987: 74)

The twelvefold chain of dependent origination reveals the basis of man's existence, the functioning of rebirth and karma. The first two of the twelvefold of dependent origination are refer to past life, the last two to future life and the rest are refer to present life.

These twelve stages in the chain are the cycle of birth and death. They are mutually related as causes and conditions. This is wheel of life, which has no beginning and an end but is a continuous and unbroken circle. It forms the twelve links of the
dependent origination in Buddhist philosophy. The twelve links of the dependent origination begins with ignorance. Ignorance is the initial stage and death is the final stage, but it is a circular process. There is no an end. However, “The death of a living being is not the end; at once another life begins to go through a similar process of birth and death, and thus repeats the round of life over and over again. In this way a living being, when considered in relation to time, forms an endless continuum. It is impossible to define what a living being is, for it is always changing and progressing through the division or stages of life. The whole series of stages must be taken in their entirety as representing the one individual being. Thus, a living being, when regarded in relation to space, forms a complex of five elements” (Takaksu, 1956: 24-25). There is no end with death. It is just a beginning of new life. Due to ignorance, it causes to rebirth after death. But, it can be shattered only when its root cause, ignorance is destroyed.

According to the theory of Dependent Origination, we can see that our suffering does not originate from others unrelated to us, but from ourselves. The doctrine of dependent origination explicitly points out how suffering begins and ends. It reveals that the beginning and ending of suffering are mutually dependent cyclic natural phenomena; that they are not attributable to ghosts, divinities, spiritual entities, or other things. Dependent arising is natural occurrences due to interdependent conditions. When each phase of the process comes about due to mutually supporting conditions suffering begins or stops. The first and root cause of suffering is Ignorance. Ignorance is the lack of insight into the nature of one’s mental processes. Ignorance makes us behave without recognizing the results and influences of our behaviours; it also cannot check our sensations and consciousness distorted by our desires. Also, other stages of the Twelve Dependent Originations are the causes of human sufferings, though they are the results of Ignorance; one of the most direct and conspicuous cause is Craving (Desire). Thus, we can and should remove our sufferings and reach the truth by removing the causes including ignorance and desire. It is required to comprehend the relationships among the components of Dependent Origination; each stage is the cause of the next stage and the result of former stage. It
is especially important to snatch the causes, results and influences of our ignorance and desires. Overcoming ignorance is the main goal of Buddhist practice. In order to eliminate the chain and attain liberation from suffering, the cycle of phenomenal life, one should eliminate ignorance, the initial stage of the twelfe fold chain of dependent origination. If the ignorance is eliminated, there is no condition for the impression of karmic forces to arise and so on. The deliverance of suffering is to overcome ignorance by attaining the right knowledge of the truth of dependent origination. The statement “When this exists, that exists; when this occurs, that occurs; when this does not exist, that does not; when this is destroyed, that is destroyed” (Nakamura, 1967: 110-111) gives the generally expression of the truth of dependent origination. The doctrine of dependent origination is the perfect and ultimate truth. Anybody who is able to comprehend the doctrine of dependent origination has the capability to engage in his own cultivation and end his suffering.

3.4 THEORY OF KARMA

In common with other systems of Indian philosophy, the theory of karma functions as a central motif in Buddhism also. In its essence, the theory of karma is the application of the law of cause and effect in the sphere of morality. All actions or deeds have consequences, which will affect the doer of the action in future. Every good deed has its good consequences and every evil deed has its own bad consequences. It is believe that there is influence of past deeds as determining the present events and present deeds as determining the future life. Th. Stcherbatsky points out that “It is the foundation of morality, because it teaches that retribution for one’s deed will come necessarily, either in this life or in a future one, either at once or in a very remote future, and neither virtue nor crime will remain unrequited” (Stcherbatsky, 1932: 880). The theory of karma states that as a man sows so must he reap. Man does not reap the consequence of actions, which he himself has not performed and that no one suffers or prospers due to the actions performed by others. Whatsoever a man reaps, that has he also sown. Karma implies or necessitates a result. Our happiness or miseries are result of our actions. Every action has its effect.
The meaning of the word karma is action or deed. It is a simple meaning, which it always retains besides its technical ones. Karma in its technical meaning is the moral quality of an action. Karma is an impersonal, natural law that operates strictly in accordance with our actions. It is law in itself and does not have any lawgiver. Karma operates in its own field without the intervention of an external, independent ruling agency. In Buddhism action is divided into three categories: physical, verbal and mental. On the one hand, Karma means all kinds of intentional actions, whether physical, verbal or mental – deeds, words and thoughts. Of these three categories, mental consists solely of mental constituents. On the other hand, physical and verbal actions consist of a mixture of mental constituents, such as the motive and decision to do something, and verbal or physical constituents, such as calling out with the voice or movements of the body. According to Buddhism, karma is volition. Mind is the main ruler of all good and bad states. It is not an entity but a process, action, energy and force. Some interpret this force as action-influence (Dhammananda, 2002: 130). It is our own doings reacting on ourselves. The pain and happiness man experiences are the result of what we have done or our own actions, whether in words or thoughts reacting on themselves. Our deeds, words and thoughts produce our prosperity and failure, our happiness and misery. According to Buddhist theory of karma, there is no agent directing or administering rewards and punishments, Buddhists do not rely on some supernatural forces to influence karmic results.

According to the Buddha, karma is neither predestination nor some sort of determinism imposed on us by some mysterious, unknown powers or forces to which we must helplessly submit ourselves. We are the result of what we were, and we will be the result of what we are. In other words, man is not one who will absolutely remain to be what he was, and he will not continue to remain as what he is. This simply means that karma is not complete determinism. On the one hand, the Buddha pointed out that if everything is determined, and then there would be no free will and no moral or spiritual life. We would merely be the slaves of our past. On the other hand, if everything is undetermined, then there can be no cultivation of moral and spiritual growth. Therefore, the Buddha accepted karma as neither strict determinism
nor absolute indeterminism but as an interaction of both. (Dhammananda, 2002: 131). Understanding the law of karma is to realize that we ourselves are responsible for our own happiness and our own misery. We are the architects of our karma. Buddhism explains that man has every possibility to mould his own karma and thereby influences the direction of his life. On the other hand, a man is not a complete prisoner of his own actions; he is not a slave of his karma. Nor is man a mere machine that automatically releases instinctive forces that enslave him. Nor is man a mere product of nature. Man has within himself the strength and the ability to change his karma. His mind is mightier than his karma and so the law of karma can be made to serve him. Man does not have to give up his hope and effort in order to surrender himself to his own karmic force. To off-set the reaction of his bad karma that he has accumulated previously, he has to do more meritorious deeds and to purify his mind rather than by praying, worshipping, performing rites or torturing his physical body in order to overcome his karmic effects. Therefore, man can overcome the effect of his evil deeds if he acts wisely by leading noble life.

According to Buddhism, all changes in this universe, where nothing is permanent are governed by karma. All actions, good and evil refer to every mode of intentional action, whether mental or physical, intellectual or volitional, verbal or nonverbal; which is to say, all deeds, thought and words. Any kind of intentional action whether mental, verbal, or physical, is regarded as Karma. It covers all that is included in the phrase thought, word and deed. Generally speaking, all good and bad actions constitute Karma. According to Buddhism, the theory of karma is a principle of nature, which has nothing to do with the idea of reward or punishment, according to which a person who acts in a certain way must later experience consequences that are pleasant or unpleasant, depending upon the nature of the action itself. In Buddhism, theory of karma is the moral law of causation. It is the order of cause and effect in action, a mental intention issuing in an effect. Events do not exist without a cause and are in turn causes of other events. That is, events are functionally dependent upon other events. The law of causation is also the relationship, which provides the continuity between events. G. N. Dhargyey gives his view regarding the theory of
karma as a special case of the general law of cause and effect. He writes, "Karmic seeds inevitably ripen in accordance with their cause, i.e., virtue leads to joy, and non-virtue to sorrow" (Dhargyey, 1974: 71). "Just as a seed cannot grow into a plant of a different type, so our actions can only produce actions of their own type. An unvirtuous action can only give rise to suffering and a positive action can only give rise to happiness" (Rabten, 1984: 114). Happiness and misery or unhappiness are the inevitable effects of causes. From a Buddhist point of view, they are not rewards and punishments, assigned by a supernatural, omniscient ruling power to a soul that has done good or evil.

Buddhist theory of karma is a law in itself, which operates in its own field without the intervention of any external. It is an independent ruling agency. It believes to the fruition of action accordingly. No emotional state arises by chances or fate or luck; rather, every mood that a living being may have is the natural fruition of actions performed in the past. It is the quality of an act, which determines its consequences. In this sense, theory of karma use to determine one's destiny through the quality of his or her acts. Man is the master of his fate. Every man is the sole responsible of his own fate. In Hinduism, the determination of the quality of an action is decided by the correct performance of a person's duty, especially his caste duties that count. In Buddhism, there is no caste distinction. The quality of an action is evaluated in terms of moral and ethical criteria. In particular, it is the mental factors, which accompany the commission of deed that determines its consequences. The Buddha emphasized that it is the mental factors involved, rather than the deeds themselves, that determine future consequences. Thus, the same deed committed with different mental factors will have different consequences. Likewise, purely accidental deeds may have neutral consequences; however if the accident occurred because insufficient mindfulness was exercised, it could have adversely results for the person responsible for it. Karma has to "...offer a comprehensive account of the whole fact of universal organization of worldly existence, in both its amazing disparity in individual allotments and in the aspects of shared and commonly experienced universality" (Verdu, 1985: 67-68). In this sense the theory of karma is primordially objective and does not recognize the
rich and the poor, the beautiful and the ugly, the higher class and lower class. All people will get the result accordingly to their own actions.

The theory of karma is concerned with the effects of the action insofar as they impinge on the doer of the action. It is held that actions which are not performed out of desire for the fruits have no karmic consequences, even though they have causal consequences. All actions for which humans can be held morally accountable have consequences. It is actions, which are performed with an interest in achieving some result or which arise from desire and passion, which bring about karmic effects. Actions, which performed in a disinterested way, which stem from no desire for the fruits of the action have no fruits. According to the theory of karma, whether our actions have consequences of a karmic sort or not are not simply a product of the action itself but of our attitude. If there is passion or desire for the object or the fruit of the action, the action has karmic consequences; failure to have desires for the fruits obstructs the formation of karmic consequences. This means that the theory of karma is rooted in ethical considerations.

Doing right action with the intention of doing so produces good consequences and wrong action with the intention of doing so produces bad consequences. The theory of karma is an application of the law of universal causation to moral causation, which deals in general with the relation between the act and its effects. According to Buddhist view, karma is an intention. For the Buddha, all that counts happens in the mind; so the moral quality of an act depends solely on the intention behind it. In ethics, our intention and desires matter in the ultimate evaluation of the action. In opposition to Brahmanism, the Buddhist theory of karma deprived ritual activity of any intrinsic value. And in opposition to Jainism, it located ethics in the mind, not in externals. The implications are enormous. If karma is located in the mind, all sentient being are ethically on the same footing. In Buddhism, "... karma is an element; it is identified with the will. Karma is the will and willful action. Its function consists in the arrangement of the separate interrelated elements into the shape of an individual life. Life is shaped through karma, that is, according to one's own deserts." (Stcherbatsky, 1932: 880). Will is the most conspicuous as a quality of mind. It is one
of the factors of consciousness because “Intentions are particularly important in
determining the moral quality, not only of the action, but of the agent, who performed
the action. A person, who performed an action, which results in bringing about good
but which was done to bring harm, is immoral because he engaged in it for that
reason. In karmic actions, since the resulting disposition correlates in kind with the
intentions, which the agent had in performing the action, the moral quality is passed
on and preserved” (Reichenbach, 1988: 401). Thus, the Buddha specified that the
moral quality of an act lies solely in its intention. This shows the difference of
Buddhist karma from that of Jainism, in which the operation of karma is physically
conceived and results from the act itself.

However, both Buddhism and Jainism posit free will. The Buddha is a greatest
advocate of the sanctity of karma, an advocate of the position that actions have effects
and an advocate of concerted action. The acknowledgement of karma is directly
related to spiritual endeavour, since religious endeavour is usually based on the
recognition of free will. The view that a person receives the fruits of his or her actions
is possible only if he has a free will. The fruit may be manifested either at an early
date or in the next life or very remote date. According to Buddhism, there is no soul
that can offer any resistance to karma or condensing or conditioning the karma.
Buddhism does not acknowledge the conception of a substantial soul monad, which
persists between lives. The general beliefs that man’s destiny is determined by the
god or by fate or is matter of chance leave no room for free will. The Buddha rejected
such beliefs or idea. The theory of karma is an assertion of free will. A person cannot
be held responsible for his actions according to such beliefs. The Buddha firmly
advocates that karma is one’s own responsibility. Therefore, “In Buddhism,
everything is individual: sorrow, salvation, samsāra, nibbana; all alike have their
basis in the individual, are conditioned by the individual” (Dahlke, 1978: 112). The
Buddha taught the autonomy and potency of human efforts. He maintained the
continuity of cause and effect.

The Buddhist theory of karma has a ubiquitous operation. It is an ever-generating
force. The Buddha put forward an explanation of human life and destiny in terms of
dependent origination, which is a representing of the working of the theory of karma on the psychological and moral planes. The theory of dependent origination in Buddhism enjoys a religious sanctity for explaining human actions. The Buddhist theory of dependent origination concerns the form ‘if this is, then that comes to be’. The Buddhist philosophy gives more emphasis upon adopting the proper inner attitude and spirit. The nobility of action is the aim, according to Buddhism, of the action doer, who is aspirant of the good result. Unless both the inner motives and external acts are purified, the mere external ceremonialism and formal monasticism are of no purposive. The Buddha preached the enormous sanctity of the law of righteousness and moral living. He taught the efficacy of free will, ethical purity and perfection (Varma, 1963: 41-42).

Theory of karma is a theory, which can explain about the good or bad fortune of a person. Therefore, “The theory of karma in all its forms is intimately linked with the theory of rebirth” (Gombrich, 1975: 215). Here, rebirth does not mean that of transmigration. Buddhist concept of rebirth is through the past tendencies of the agent but never chooses to talk of the other world. Buddhism does not believe the existence of permanent soul, which according to the traditional metaphysicians, continues amid all physical changes. Buddhism rejects the conventional way of thinking about the soul. If there is no soul, one can ask the criterion of personal identity. The personal criterion of personal identity, according to Buddhism is a unity or organization or becoming. A person is a unity of physical characteristics, reason, feeling, perception and tendency. These five characteristic is known as five skandhas. The goal of Buddhism is to attain salvation here and now, in this life. According to Buddhism, man can attain nirvāṇa whatever their station in life, so that their past karma was no longer very important; and that they would not be reborn, so that their future fate was also not a subject of curiosity. Human nature is not depended on the nature of his past actions but rather is largely determined by the nature of his present actions. The past karma may have some influences on the moral life of the agent in the present. The present karma, however, is the final authority functioning actively in determining the individual moral status. So, the past combined with the present influences the future
which is to come. Only the present moment exists and can be said to be within management, and the responsibility of using this moment lies with each individual either for good or evil. Every individual has an amount of free will and can, therefore, modify his or her action and affect his or her future. In other words, belief in the Buddhist theory of karma inevitably rejects fatalism, pre-determinism and God-determinism. It is not fatalism nor is it a doctrine of predetermination.

In Buddhism, the theory of karma is an inscrutable destiny which determines every one's present state of affairs. According to Buddhism, nirvāṇa can be attained through one's own efforts towards gnosis and meditative absorption, but not the meditation of any gods and of any priesthood. The conservation of morality is the priority. The purification of action and motivation is supreme important in one's life according Buddhist teaching. Through one's own efforts alone can one attain nirvāṇa, and hence the Buddha stressed vigilance, constancy of endeavour, and a rigorous struggle against one's baser propensities (Varma, 1963: 39). According to Buddhism, we can conclude that good karma is equal to good intention, good intention is equal to purification of the mind and purification of mind is equal to spiritual progress, that is, progress towards nirvāṇa.

All action has its due results. It is the action or the cause that comes first and then the result. The cause of death is not disease but birth. Like other Indian traditions, Buddhism talk about what rebirth is. The function of karma in rebirth can be explained using the twelve fold chain of dependent origination. The twelve fold chain of dependent origination is an application of the principle of conditionality to the lives of the so called individual as in accordance with the results of his karma he passes from birth to birth. The first two of the twelve fold chain-ignorance and impression of karmic forces, relate how the past actions in one's previous lives affect his present situation. Ignorance concerns the defilements that a person had in the past. Ignorance means not knowing or understanding the true nature of our existence. Through Ignorance, good or evil deeds are performed which will lead a person to be reborn. Rebirth can occur in various planes of existence: the human world, the celestial or higher planes, or even suffering planes depending of the quality of a
person's karma. Impression of karmic forces represents the karma resulting from the
good and bad actions of a person in the past that determine many aspects of his
present life. The third of the twelvefold chain, embryonic consciousness represents
the consciousness that enters a mother womb at the beginning of one's present life.
The other aggregates are also present in very subtle forms at this moment, but since
consciousness is the dominant aggregate, it is used to represent this stage in one's life.
The fourth link, psycho-physical organism corresponds to the fetus growing in the
mother's womb and the development of its body and mind. The completion of the
fetus's sense organs corresponds to the fifth link, the sixth sense organs. The child
from birth until one or two years of age is equated with the sixth link, contact
between sense organs and object. The sense organs, object and consciousness are all
present, but the infant still cannot properly discriminate between suffering and
pleasure. The stage at which a child is able to differentiate between suffering and
pleasure but does not yet has any sexual desires corresponds to the seventh link, sense
experience. The emergence of sexual lust corresponds to the eighth link, desire and
thirsty for enjoyment. Striving for fame and fortune is represented by the ninth of the
twelve fold chain of dependent origination, clinging to the enjoyment or grasping. A
person thus accumulates karma that will bear fruit in the future. This stage
corresponds to the tenth link, will to be born or becoming.

The link of desire and thirsty for enjoyment and clinging to the enjoyment or
grasping in the present are similar to the link of ignorance of the past, since all result
in the formation of karma. In a similar way, the link of will to be born in the present
is similar to the link of impression of karmic forces in the past, since both can be
equated with karma. The third to tenth of the twelve fold chain of dependent
origination are explained as referring to one's present life. The five links- embryonic
consciousness, psycho-physical organism, six sense organs, sense object contact,
sense experience are called the five fruit of the present, which were caused by actions
of the past. The three link- desire and thirsty for enjoyment, clinging to the enjoyment
or grasping and will to be born are called the present causes, which will bear fruit in
the future.
The doctrine of rebirth in Buddhism is regarded not as a mere theory but as a verifiable fact. In Buddhism, it is described that “As long as this karmic force exists there is re-birth, for beings are merely the visible manifestation of this invisible karmic force. Death is nothing but the temporary end of this temporary phenomenon. It is not the complete annihilation of this so-called being. The organic life has ceased, but the karmic force which hitherto actuated it has not been destroyed. As the karmic force remains entirely undisturbed by the disintegration of the fleeting body, the passing away of the present dying thought-moment only conditions a fresh consciousness in another birth. It is karma, rooted in ignorance and craving, that conditions rebirth. Past karma conditions the present birth; and present karma, in combination with past karma, conditions the future” (Mahathera, 1982: 16-7).

According to Buddhism, the retributive process of karma can span more than one lifetime. Rebirth often referred to as walking the wheel of life (samsāra). It is the process of being born over and over again in different times and at different situations. As long as there is delusion, greed and aversion, and as long as passions are not extinguished, we generate karma. Because we eventually accumulate immaterialized karma in this or in a past lifetime, there is a next lifetime in which the accumulated karma will take form. Only when all accumulated karma is realized and the generation of new karma is calmed, one can enter the stream that leads to nirvāṇa. This process continues until nirvāṇa is reached, which signifies the cessation of rebirth and, hence, suffering.

The Upanisads and Buddhism have basically identical ideas on rebirth. Being are, by ignorance, desire and will, entangled in an ongoing process of repeated birth and death conditioned by actions and operating in such a way that it is possible to link a given being to a chain of past existence. Both systems encourage release from the trauma of birth and death through ethical conduct, wisdom and meditation (Reat, 1977: 163). According to the theory of karma in Upanisads and Buddhism, karma and rebirth is the responsible of one’s destiny. The theory of karma and rebirth is the process, which man can attain his destiny. The condition for rebirth is ignorance and desire. Birth is not a beginning, but only a continuation. The root structure of
ignorance, desire and karmic forces remain firm and resolute. Buddhism used to explain the theory of rebirth without an abiding entity. The Buddha does not call it reincarnation because there is no permanent or unchanging entity that can transmigrates from one life to another next life. In Buddhism, rebirth is part of continuous process of change. It is the continuity of cause and effect but not permanence. So there is rebirth but not transmigration. There is moral responsibility but not an independent and permanent self (Santina, www.buddhanet.net). On the other hand, the *Upanisads* maintains that the theory of rebirth do incorporate a transmigrating entity. Karma is the state of mind. Therefore, karma is considered as the instrument, which can determine rebirth. It can be said that rebirth is the result of karma. It is considered that the motivating force of rebirth is desire. The active side of desire is will. It is the highest faculty of the mind. “The Buddha explained the will to exist as the craving for existence” (Dhammananda, 2002: 145-46). Rebirth takes place as long as craving for existence and craving for sensual pleasures or attachment exist in the mind. Those strong forces prevail in each and every living being in this universe. Rebirth occurs again and again until and unless one makes earnest efforts to eradicate craving and attachment from his or her mind. According to Buddhism, death does not spell either entrance to eternal life or complete annihilation. It is, rather, the portal to a new rebirth which will be followed by more growth, decay and then another death. The Buddhist believed that rebirth for all being will take place somewhere may be in any form for a limited period as long as their good or bad karma remains in the subconscious mind as mental energy.

To the Buddhist, the present life is not the only life between two eternities of misery and happiness. For Buddhism, as long as there is a clinging to life, a desire to go on existing, the current of consciousness does not come to a stop with the cessation of body’s vital function. This present life is only one of the indefinite numbers of states of being and that this worldly life one episode among many others. When the physical body is no more capable of functioning or there is cessation of its vital function or die, energies does not die or cease with the body. It continue to take birth of another life whether it some other forms or another living kingdom. As
Buddhist believes, rebirth is a natural occurrence. According to them death is not crisis in life but as normal event for he or she knows that whoever is born must suffer, old age and ultimately die. The Buddha taught ignorance of the real nature of existence produces desire. Unsatisfied desire for existence and sensual pleasures is the cause of rebirth. When all unsatisfied desire is extinguished, then only rebirth ceases. To escape from rebirth is to extinguish all desire. To extinguish desire, it is necessary to destroy ignorance. When ignorance is destroyed, the worthlessness of every such rebirth is perceived, as well as the paramount needs to adopt a course of life by the desire for such repeated rebirth can be abolished. The Buddha taught that rebirth can be dispelled and sorrow removed by realization of the four noble truths, and through not any other source. To eradicate all ignorance, one must persevere diligently in the practice of all embracing altruism in conduct, intelligence and wisdom. One must also destroy all desire for the lower, personal pleasure and selfish craving.

3.5 THEORY OF NO-SOUL

Buddhism stresses upon the importance of the autonomy of the human will. “The Buddha neither affirmed nor denied the existence of ātman” (Nakamura, 1976: 10). As S. Radhakrishnan and C. A. Moore write, “As he is deeply interested in the ethical remaking of man, as he feels that metaphysical disquisitions would take us away from the task of individual change, he keeps silent on the nature of the absolute reality, the self, and nirvāṇa. But his silence is not a cloak for ignorance or skepticism. Whereof we cannot speak we must keep silent. This is the great tradition of the mysticism of the Upanishads” (Radhakrishnan and Moore, 1957: 272). However, it can be mentioned that the Buddha does not believe the existence of soul as a permanent entity. The theory of no-soul in Buddhism is arrived through the employment of the theory of causality. All things are changing. So, it is unreasonable to look for an absolute unchanging theory of the existence of soul as an eternal entity. “Since there is nothing permanent and everything is in a state of flux, it automatically follows that the soul as a self-subsisting entity does not exist” (Goyal, 2004: 131). According to Buddhism, if it is possible to have an immortal soul as an eternal unit, then there...
cannot be either a rise or a fall in one’s life. In Buddhism, the concept of soul is merely an illusion. A human life is composed of mind and matter. There are five aggregates of material and mental forces, which are changing all the time, which the combination of the five aggregates, constitute a being (Bhibhu and Minakshi, 1998: 107). They are:

1) Physical form (Rupa)
2) Feeling or sensation, of whatever kind (vedanā)
3) Perception, of sense objects or reaction to the senses (samjñā)
4) Mental properties (samskāra)
5) Consciousness, which is the awareness and fundamental factor of all of the above four (vijnāna)

These material and mental forces combine and recombine with no underlying soul and condition another existence. The human life is the co-existence of matter and mind. Matter consists of the combination of sensations, perceptions, volitional activities and consciousness. Matter consists of the combination of solidity, fluidity, motion and heat. Apart from mind and matter which constituted the so-called man, there is no such thing as an immortal soul, which lies behind them. “There is no permanent soul involved in the matter” (Kar, 1984: 23). The process of becoming, the wheel of life, continues indefinitely until its main cause, craving or selfish desire for existence, is totally annihilated. “Physical body, feeling, perception, mental properties and consciousness are all impermanent and all these are suffering. They are all non-self. Nothing of them is substantial. They are all appearances, empty of substantiality or reality. There can be no individuality without putting together components. And this is always a process of becoming: there can be no becoming without a becoming different, and there can be no becoming different without a dissolution, a passing away or decay, which sooner or later will inevitably come about” (Nakamura, 1976: 8).

According to Buddhism, all impermanent is suffering and all impermanent and suffering is not self. In reality, there is no abiding entity that could be identified with a self, because the states of perception, consciousness, and mind constantly change.
When the physical body dies, consciousness and all mental activities cease. Therefore, there can be no soul as permanent and transmigrating entity.

3.6 ETHICS IN BUDDHISM

Buddhism is considered as an ethical system par excellence. According to Saddhatissa as he gives his observation in his book Buddhist Ethics, Essence of Buddhism to equate the way of ultimate and final liberation with the path of common, everyday morality is the significant features of Buddhist ethics. The Buddhist ethics is at once a way of living for here and now and for the future; no distinction is made between the temporal and eternal realms. There is an excellent code of morals, which is adaptable to all climes and ages. It is the doctrine of actuality, a means of deliverance. The approach of Buddhism does not show the necessity of worshipping God or prayer but emphasis towards leading a life of love. The teaching of Buddhism is associated with the attitude of love, compassion, sympathy and joy, impartiality and forgiveness. The goal is to make them so much a part of one’s self that one acts unconsciously in terms of them when making moral choices. The Buddhist ethics aims at constructing a right direction of human action in order to lead a moral aspect of living. So, for Buddhism ethics has to do with human conduct or action. The ethics of Buddhism is referred to the way we act. It is the ethics of action. Action is usually understood to refer to thinking about action, not action itself. The Buddhist ethics is based on the precise understanding of action (Nishijima, 1998: 183).

The base of Buddhism is morality and wisdom in its apex. The Buddhist ethics concerns about our relationship with us and with our fellow human beings. Morality in Buddhism is not founded on any doubtful revelation nor is it the ingenious invention of an exceptional mind, but it is a rational and practical code based on verifiable fact and individual experience. According to Buddhism, there is no external agency that can play an important role in moulding the character of a man. There is no one to give reward or punishment to anybody. Everything is depending on the action performed. Misery or happiness of our life is not the reward or punishment given by a supernatural being. These are the inevitable results of our actions. In
Buddhism, the moral life constitutes permanent and eternal happiness bearing the
stamp of spirituality and sacredness.

The Buddhist ethics are not arbitrary standards invented by people for their own
utilitarian purpose. Nor are they arbitrarily imposed from within. Law and social
customs do not form the basis of Buddhist ethics. The Buddhist ethics finds it
foundation not on changing social customs but rather on the unchanging laws of
nature. Buddhist ethical values are intrinsically a part of nature and the unchanging
law of cause and effect (Dhammananda, 2002: 205). The practical purpose of
Buddhist ethics is to find the ultimate happiness as the final goal of life. The Buddha
taught only that which was useful in the procedure of the attainment of nirvāṇa or the
blessed state of spirituality where neither attachment nor afflictions prevail (Shukla,
2002: 219). The Buddhist path to attain nirvāṇa, each individual is considered
responsible for his or her own fortunes and misfortunes. Each individual is expected
to work out deliverance through understanding and effort. For the Buddhist, the
attainment of nirvāṇa is the result of one’s moral development. The way to attain the
final liberation as Buddhist concerned is to avoid all actions that have their roots in
greed, hatred and delusion that spring from the selfishness fosters the harmful
delusion of selfhood, to do all those actions which are rooted in the virtues generosity,
love and wisdom, and to purify our mind. As it is the way of world, “The Buddha
prefers to show the path towards the ultimate goal, the final liberation; he lays
emphasis on modes of ethical conduct that would help one realize that the state free
from misery and pain which, as he sees, is the way of the world” (Bibhu and
Minakshi, 1998: 129). The first condition for attaining liberation is an undefiled
mind, which impels one to act accordingly. The Buddha taught to do what is good
with an undefiled mind. The ethical order of achieving goodness and righteous is
governed by mind. When one act or speak with a defiled mind he or she is bounce to
go down into the realm of suffering. If one act or speak with undefiled mind, then the
good follows. If we think good, we shall act good and that shall lead to the attainment
of good, the attainment of good will bring the ultimate happiness, which is the goal of
life (Shukla, 2002: 220). Thus, the Buddha laid stress on human dignity and taught
the worth of the human being to lead a life of moral perfection in order to overcome the sphere of suffering.

Liberation and the way to achieve it are respectively the third and fourth of the Buddha’s Four Noble Truths. A large part of human misery and pain are due to ill-founded belief in a permanent individuality and the consequent craving after one’s own good by means of satisfying the endless distress in life. The depiction of the world as a vale of suffering is caused by man’s proneness to attachment and craving for what is impermanent. The way of Buddha is the way to deliverance from sickness, suffering and death. It is described variously in most instances as the possession of a state or condition called nirvāṇa (Welbon, 1966: 301). The Buddha defines nirvāṇa as the annihilation of pain and misery is a truth, “... the annihilation of all suffering is nirvāṇa” (Bibhu and Minakshi, 1998: 129). “Nirvāṇa is the absence, the destruction, of suffering. It involves the eradication of ignorance through the attainment of wisdom” (Welbon, 1996: 301). Nirvāṇa is certainly a deliverance which is completely attainable in life. It is also mentioned that “Nirvāṇa is freedom, but not freedom from circumstances; it is freedom from the bonds with which we have bound ourselves to circumstances” (Thittila, 1986: 112). The Buddhist concept of nirvāṇa does not mean annihilation of human existence. The Buddhist sought the annihilation of suffering, not of existence. Therefore, “Nirvāṇa is excellent, transcendental, uncreated, bliss of emancipation, eternal, unassailable, noble and free from lust. Nothing is left to be achieved after attaining nirvāṇa. It is the highest truth. Nirvāṇa is the highest vision, truthful experience, the best feeling that one can imagine, feel, think or speak of. This is the highest psychical state where consciousness appears to be face to face with reality.” (Muni, 1984:165). However, “Nirvāṇa show itself to be eternal rest, eternal stillness, the great peace, whose realm the freed and the delivered one enters even during his present life, which he completely realizes at death, and in which he has taken possession forever of everything that is true and real” (Bibhu and Minakshi, 1998: 129). Nirvāṇa is beyond logic and reasoning. To understand and realize the truth of nirvāṇa, it is necessary to follow the eightfold path.
For Buddhism, the path to moral perfection constitutes the Fourth Noble Truth realized by Buddha and is generally described as the Noble Eightfold Path. The Noble Eightfold Path forms the ethical conduct of Buddhism. The Noble Eightfold Path is the Fourth Noble truth, which leads to attain nirvana. It is a way of life consisting of eight factors, which a man can live happily, peacefully. By walking in this path, it will be possible for us to find an end to suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path is adopted as noble way of life. It is also known as the Middle Path because it is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. Optimism tends to overestimate the condition of life, whereas pessimism tends to underestimate them. The Buddha declared that those who wish to attain the ideal of life, it is necessary to avoid the two extremes of sensual-indulgence and self-mortification. To avoid the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification, the Buddha advised to strictly follow this eightfold path. The two extremes misguided attempts to gain release from suffering. The sensual-indulgence is the attempt to extinguish the dissatisfaction by gratifying desire. This approach gives pleasure, but the enjoyment won is gross, transitory and devoid of deep contentment. A tight grip over the mind of human beings can be exercised through the sensual-indulgence (Bodhi, 1999: 10). “The self mortification is the attempt to gain liberation by afflicting the body. This approach may stem from a genuine aspiration for deliverance, but it works within the compass of wrong assumption that render the energy expended barren of results. The error is taking the body to be the cause of bondage, when the real source of trouble lies in the mind – the mind obsessed by greed, aversion and delusion” (Bodhi, 1999: 11). “The Buddha said that sensual-indulgence is low, vulgar, worldly, ignoble and conducive to harm and self-mortification is painful, ignoble and conducive to harm” (Thera, 1982: 34). Both are profitless. The self-indulgence retards one’s spiritual progress and self-mortification weakens one’s intellect. The Middle path avoids the two extremes, gives vision and wisdom. “The ethics of Buddhism stressed the universal norms (dhammas) which are constant and apply to everyone. They should not conflict with human nature” (Nakamura, 1976: 25). The Middle Path is a righteous way of life that does not advocate the acceptance of decrees given by someone outside oneself. A person practices the Middle Path, the guide for moral conduct, not out of fear of any supernatural agency, but
out of recognizing the intrinsic value in following such an action. He or she chooses this self-imposed discipline with a definite end in view: self-purification (Dhammanada, 2002: 118). “The doctrine of the Middle Path that the Buddha proclaimed is humanistic ethic. It is related, even in religious life, to the fundamental attitude of Buddhism which is mainly represented as the absence of special dogmas. The universal norms of human life are constant, although the ways of applying them vary. Therefore, in each case, they must be applied in the most suitable way” (Nakamura, 1976: 25). The middle Path is a planned course of inward culture and progress. A person can make real progress in righteous and insight by following this path even without engaging in external worship and prayers. According to the Buddha, anyone who lives in accordance with the Dharma will be guided and protected by that very universal law. When a person lives according to Dharma, he or she will be living in harmony with the universal law (Dhammanada, 2002: 118). According to Buddhism, the Noble Eightfold Path is the way leads to a complete end of suffering, suffering in all of its forms The Nible Eight fold Path shows us how to attain nirvana, the final goal of human life. Following the Middle path will brings suffering to an irreversible full stop leading to the attainment of ultimate peace and righteous life. The Noble eight fold Path is thus the golden means to realize the ending of suffering. It is the way of deliverance, which involves moral discipline, moral virtue of love and kindness. It consists of:

1. Right Understanding or View
2. Right Thought or Resolve or Intention
3. Right Speech
4. Right Action
5. Right Livelihood
6. Right Effort or Exertion
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Concentration

1. **Right Understanding or View**: Right Understanding primarily involves the understanding of the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths as propounded by the Buddha. This is the right way of interpreting and viewing one’s existence as well as
the world. Right Understanding is usually taken to mean an understanding of things as they are. It signifies wisdom and resulting from the proper understanding of the Four Noble Truths. Right Understanding also means that one understands the nature of the ethical distinction of karma as what are wholesome and unwholesome, and how they may be performed with the body, speech and mind. Wholesome karma is action that is morally commendable, helpful to spiritual growth, and productive of benefits for oneself and others, whereas unwholesome karma is action that blameworthy, detrimental to spiritual development, and conducive to suffering for oneself and others. By understanding karma, a person will learn to avoid evil and do good, thereby creating favourable outcomes in life. Right Understanding involves a correct grasp of the theory of karma, the moral efficacy of action. The world is transitory and full of suffering. Right understanding alone can take one’s mind away from the things of this world. It is also taken as referring to a clear understanding of the Three Characteristics of Life (that all compounded things are transient, subject to suffering, and without a Self) and the Law of Dependent Origination. A person with complete Right Understanding is one who is free from ignorance, and by the nature of that enlightenment removes the roots of evil from the mind and becomes liberated. The lofty aim of a practicing Buddhist is to develop the mind to gain Right Understanding about the self, life and all phenomena. Right understanding further signifies the knowledge of where we wish to go and what we wish to achieve in life. Right knowledge can quench one’s thirst or desire and is therefore the foremost requisite for one who wishes to take the path of moral perfection. It is right to say that, “The important of right view can be gauged from the fact that our perspectives on the crucial issues of reality and value have a bearing that goes beyond mere theoretical convictions. They govern our attitude, our actions, and our whole orientation to existence. Our view might not be clearly formulated in our mind; we might have only a hazy conceptual grasp of our beliefs. But whether formulated or not, expressed or maintained in silence, these views have a far-reaching influence. They structure our perception, order our values, crystallize into the ideational framework through which interpret to ourselves the meaning of our being in the world” (Bodhi, 1999: 14).
2. **Right Thought or Resolve or Intention**: Right Thought is sometimes known as right resolve or right intention. It involves thinking in the right way about right things, not about wrong things with more dynamic quality of intention, attitude or aspiration. Here, it is important to understand that aspiration does not mean desire that comes out of ignorance. Right Thought refers to the mental state of eliminating wrong ideas or notions, which strengthen and encourage evil. It is the mental state of promoting the other moral factors directing to the attainment of moral perfection (*nirvāṇa*). Right Thought must never have the slightest touch of evil in it. It must be always with the aspiration of truth and goodness, getting away from prejudice or ignorance. Wrong thought, “. . . may be considered a result of our inability to understand the nature and function of conception. Conceptions are formed in various ways by human beings. A conceiving mind is necessarily involved; however, not every conception so conceived earns the status of a meaningful conception. It must relate to an object, whether mental or material, that a community of intelligent beings can agree on” (Kalupahana, 1994: 101). However, “Right thought mainly refers to the purposive or conative aspect of mental activity, the cognitive aspect being covered by right understanding. It would be artificial, however, to insist too strongly on the division between these two functions. From the Buddhist perspectives, the cognitive and purposive sides of the mind do not remain isolated in separate compartments but intertwine and interact in closed correlation. Emotional predilections influence views, and views determine predilections. Thus, a penetrating view of the nature of existence, gained through deep reflection and validated through investigation, bring with it a restructuring of values which sets the mind moving towards the goals commensurate with the new vision. The application of the mind needed to achieve those goals is what is meant by the right intention” (Bodhi, 1999: 26). Right Thought has three aspects:

a) The intention of renunciation, which is selfless and thinks for the welfare of others. It counters the intention of desire. Desire is to be abandoned not because it is morally evil but because it is a root suffering. Renunciation, turning away from craving and its drive
gratification, becomes the key to happiness, to freedom from the hold of attachment.

b) The intention of goodwill and benevolence, which is opposed to hatred, ill-will and thoughts governed by anger and aversion. The intention of good-will does not raise resentment. It does not provoke retaliation creating enemies and poisoning relationships. It restricts the generation of unwholesome karma. On the other hand, ill-will is the destructive force, which can generate self-contempt, chronic depression, or a tendency to irrational outbursts of violence.

c) The intention of non-harming, which is opposed to cruelty, aggressive, violent thought and lack of consideration for others. The intention of non-harming is the thought guided by compassion, which supplies the compliment to kindness. Thus, Right Thought denotes the thoughts of selfless renunciation or detachment, thought of love and thought of non-violence, which are extended to all beings. It has been described as thought, which is free from lust, ill-will, and cruelty. Any amount of evil is associated with Right Thought. Right Thought serves as springboards on the path toward moral progress becoming one’s thought benevolent, harmless, and selfless and filled with love and compassion.

3. **Right Speech:** Right Speech is the right mode of cultivating gentle, loving and kindness speech to our fellow being. Right Speech involves respect for truth and respect for the welfare of all. It means abstention from a lie, backbiting and slander, engaging unnecessary talk and meaningless argument, use of harsh, rude and abusive words that may hurt others or bring hatred, enmity, disunity and disharmony among individuals. Right Speech is being open and truthful. Right Speech includes the admission of ignorance honestly. As speech is an extremely important part of our life, one should not speak carelessly so as not to hurt others. Speaking carefully help us to realize that it is important to be responsible for what we say. Speech is to be delivered at the appropriate moment and place. The avoidance to underestimate the power of
speech and controlling over the faculty of speech is included in Right Thought. It is said that a harsh word can wound more deeply than weapons. The main of harsh word is aversion, assuming the form of anger. It intends to cause pain other fellow beings. On the other hand, a gentle and treasure word can win the heart and mind of the most hardened evil doer. However, it must be commensurate with honesty and right thought.

It is concerned that Right Speech is to be followed in order to avoid hurting somebody verbally. "The relevance or goal-directedness of speech provides a moral justification for avoiding wrong speech, such as falsehood, slander, harsh words and frivolous talk or gossip. Right Speech is thus defined as that which does not lead to one’s own torment nor to another’s injury” (Kalupahana, 1994: 105). According to Buddhist morality in life, it is necessary to control, cultivate and utilize our faculty of speech positively in order to develop a harmonious society. All rules of moral conduct involve respect that is founded upon the understanding of equality and reciprocity. Where there is respect for truth and well being of others in our mind, there is Right Speech so as to achieve a greater harmony within society.

4. Right Action: Right Action is the decent behavior. It refers to the total avoidance of violence and passion at all levels of existence. “Right action entails respect for life, respect for property and respect for personal relationships” (Santina, www.buddhanet.net). As Bhikkhu Bodhi writes, “Right Action means refraining from unwholesome deeds that occur with body as their natural means of expression. The pivotal element in this path factor is the mental factor of abstinence, but because this abstinence applies to action performed through the body, it is called right action” (Bodhi, 1999: 49). Right Action is correspondence generally in observing the first three of the five precepts (Panchasila), propounded by the Buddha. They are:

a) Abstinence from taking life (killing): This precept concerns to avoid killing of any sentient beings (i.e., living being endowed with mind or consciousness-human being, animals and insects). It aims at abstaining from an extinction of life-force from its existence. An intentional killing
and deliberate destruction of life of a being endowed with consciousness is thoroughly condemned. It is mentioned that, “Killing or destruction of life is considered as an extreme form of the manifestation of passion of anger” (Sobti, 1985: 46). This precept is based on the consideration that life is dear to all, all fear death. All value life and seek happiness, as they are averse to pain. This precept is the foundation of non-violence in Buddhism.

b) Abstinence from stealing (respect for property): The philosophical underlying concept of this precept concerns not to take which is not given with thievish intent of stealing, cheating or forcing. In other words, it can be said that this precept involves controlling the desire for material possession. This concept of avoiding which is not given and abstaining from it basically underlines an idea of consent and honesty. It is based on the social principle of giving and taking, so as it is to be practiced charity or generosity. It implies the respect for the belongings of others and their right to use in the service of others and whole well being. It also “… covers every form of theft by whatever euphemistic term it may be known, from mental covetousness to business methods which, though legal, violate the moral law” (Humphreys, 1954: 112). For Buddhism, everybody is free to earn, though whatever wealth and property acquire should be through the right way and honestly and also it should be used to altruistic end.

c) Abstinence from committing sexual misconduct (respect for personal relationships): Abstinence from committing sexual misconduct is to maintain the respect for personal relationships. Respect for personal relationships means not to involve in adultery and to abstain from committing sexual misconduct or wrongful sexual intercourse. It concerns the importance of maintaining self respect and trust within a society as to make the society a better place to live in. The basic underlying understanding of this precept is confined to two viewpoints – ethical
viewpoint and spiritual viewpoint. The ethical viewpoint is to guard marital relation from outside disruption and to promote trust and fidelity within the marital union. The spiritual viewpoint is to help in restriction of the powerful proclivity of sexual instinct in order to walk in the direction of renunciation, which reaches its consummation in the observance of celibacy. After all, it is the mental element, which matters, for this precept is aimed at controlling and sublimation of sexual desires.

Thus, Right Action concerns for desisting and abstaining from killing or destroying life, stealing and involving in immoral sexual conduct or illegitimate intercourse. It promotes respectable and peaceful living avoiding dishonest dealing with others.

5. Right Livelihood: Right Livelihood is a factor under moral conduct, which refers to ensure that one earns a living in society in a righteous way avoiding all dishonest means of doing so. “Right livelihood is that by which the disciple of the Noble One support himself, to the exclusion of wrong modes of living” (Bibhu and Minakshi, 1998: 131). One ought not to earn a living in such as to violate the underlying principles of moral conduct. It is an extension of the moral elements of Right Speech and Right Action. This precept concerns not to take the forbidden means for the sake of maintaining the very nature of life, but to work in consistency with good determination. Maintaining a life through righteous way of living is the life that maintains the highest form of life. And, the highest form of life is the culmination of the moral life. The Buddha lay down five specific kind of living to be prohibited in order to avoid causing hurt, injuring or harmful to others (Santina, www.buddhanet.net): - i) trading in living being for animal slaughter as well as slave dealing and prostitution, ii) trading in arms and weapons, iii) trading in meat production and butchery, iv) trading in intoxicating drinks and drugs, and v) trading poison. Therefore, for Buddhist, one should not adopt a profession that involves suffering to others like trading in living being, lethal weapons intoxicating drugs, slaughtering for food, trickery and usury. Trading in the slaughter of animals, arms and weapons, and poison violate respect for life. Trading in slaves and prostitution
violates respect for personal relationships. Trading in intoxicating drinks and drugs violate the moral principles of respect for well-being of others. All these five living are specially to be prohibited as these are involved in causing insecurity, suffering and discord in society. The principle underlying for avoiding these five living is to acknowledge the necessity for perfect mental, moral and physical control in order to reach a respectful life. Right Livelihood concerns the obligation of the moral character of the life of purity, righteousness and a life of sufficient that can be achieved through one's honest effort without resorting to deceit and trickery.

6. **Right Effort or Exertion**: Right Effort is, "... the constant endeavour to maintain moral progress by banishing evil thoughts and entering good ones" (Bishop, 1975: 118). This is the necessity of constant mindfulness about truth (Chatterjee and Datta, 1984: 130). It refers to cultivate positive attitude and sincere enthusiasm in whatever we do. It gives us the awareness of the necessity to be mindful about the effect of our actions. It consists in making sustained effort and determination to give up evil habit and develop the good ones, which the focus of the entire path. A sustained and continuous enthusiasm is needed in achieving one's goal. To achieve the goal, it is also require having determination so as not to divert from trivialities. Right effort provides energy towards discarding evil tendencies and unwholesome state of mind. There are four aspect of Right Effort (Bodhi, 1999: 59). They are:

a) The effort to relinquish the evil and unwholesome thoughts, which have already arisen and accumulated. This aspect of effort to overcome the old evil and unwholesome thoughts which are deep-rooted in the mind.

b) The effort to prevent the arising evil, which has not yet arisen. It is the restraint of the senses that put a stop to the influx of unwholesome thoughts.

c) The effort to induce good, which has not yet arisen. This aspect of effort concerns to initiate and produce wholesome attitudes those are yet to arise.
This effort is regarded as a tremendous significant for it determines the direction in which life on this earth can move in the right way.

d) The effort to maintain and cultivate the good, which has already arisen. This aspect of effort refers to promote wholesome and favourable objects of concentration that has arisen and not to allow them to disappear, instead bringing them to growth to the full perfection of development.

It is the Right Effort that can lessen and get rid of the number of unwholesome mental states, eliminating every complex and mental inhibition. It is the way to make possible the establishment of wholesome thoughts as a natural part of our mind directing to liberation from suffering. The higher ethical virtues of generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, determination, loving kindness and equanimity can be promoted through the practice of Right Effort.

7. Right Mindfulness: The need of keeping constant vigilance in mind for what one should do and the goals to be laid down is stressed in Right Mindfulness. It is the mental faculty, which can bring the field of experience into focus and make it accessible to insight. Mindfulness is presence of mind and vigilant attention. Vigilant attention leads us to see correctly and attain a point of view from which we see beyond the pairs of opposites. Right Mindfulness is described as contemplation of the four fundamental objective spheres — i) contemplation concerning the body, ii) contemplation concerning the feeling or sensation, iii) contemplation concerning the mind, and iv) contemplation concerning the phenomena. “These contemplations are chiefly analytical. They anticipate in many respects the methods and effects of modern psycho-analysis” (Govinda, 1961: 69). Mindfulness initiates the contemplative course of action. When it becomes established, it arouses investigation, the probing quality of intelligence. When mindfulness is strong, the mind stays with its object and penetrates its characteristics deeply. It facilitates the achievement of both serenity and insight. It can lead to deep concentration or wisdom. It serves as the guard charged with the responsibility of making sure the mind does not slip away from the object to lose itself in random undirected thoughts. It also keep watch over the factors stirring in the mind,
catching the hindrances beneath their camouflages and expelling them before they cause harm. It means vigilance so that one may not be swayed by desire and anger, and hope and fear. To be mindfulness is to control the mind so as to get free from all fears and miseries, which are proceed from the mind. If one is able to control his mind, then all good things will follow him wherever he moves, conquering all unwholesome thoughts and evil disturbance. All those who aspire for perfection are necessary to cultivate right mindfulness. One must be conscious of all his acts, both physical and mental. When there is no mindfulness, all merits are lost. "Just as a diseased person is disqualified for all actions, so a mind devoid of mindfulness is unfit for all good deeds" (Joshi, 1967: 130). Mindfulness is the one way to achieve the end of suffering. "Mindfulness is a power, a process, which transforms human personality and leads from ignorance to knowledge. It implies awareness, vigilance, recollection, remembrance, and promotes tranquility of mind" (Joshi, 1969: 68). Thus, in Buddhism, mindfulness is considered as quintessence of morality. "It is often understood as way of cleaning the mind all discriminations and conceptions, leading to a preconceptual stage of perfection" (Kalupahana, 1994: 109). The mind without mindfulness is cloudy, hazy, not clear and full of evil conditions and disturbance accumulating with fears and miseries.

8. **Right Concentration**: It is the highest verge of attaining nirvāṇa. It is mind-development, which one can reach to height beyond our normal understanding. "Concentration is the practice of developing one-pointedness of the mind on one single object, either physical or mental, which is associated with wholesome consciousness. The mind is totally absorbed in the object without distractions, wavering, anxiety or downsiness" (Dhammananda, 2002: 125). The contemplation of the four fundamental objective spheres of Right Mindfulness are the object of concentration and the four aspects of Right Effort are the prerequisites for concentration. Right Effort and Right Mindfulness are closely related with Right Concentration. It is the concentration of mind associated with wholesome consciousness, which could be achieved through the systematic cultivation of meditation. It is the mental culture without which we cannot attain wisdom. Internal
happiness and peace of mind can be acquired through Right Concentration. "It is to refine our understanding of the Noble path. It is to arrive at a state of being that is quite and unimpeded by transient concerns" (Chandra, 2005: 19). Right Concentration has awarded two ways of remuneration – it brings mental and physical well-being, comfort, joy, calm, tranquility, and it also brings all thoughts and emotions in a spirit of neutrality and prepares the mind to attain wisdom, as it helps the mind to see the things as they truly are. Right Concentration has four gradual stages for the development of mind. The first stage maintains the feeling of joy and happiness, discarding the passionate desires, evil thoughts and sluggishness. In the second stage, the mind is made one-pointed and stops all intellectual activities. In the third stage, even the feeling of joy disappears but the dispositions toward it remain. In the fourth stage, all sensations even of happiness and unhappiness, of joy and sorrow, disappear, only pure equanimity and awareness remaining. Right Concentration can be described as equal to a transformation of consciousness. It eliminates the tension between subject and object, or rather the creation of such a conceptual discrimination, through the synthesizing force of pure experience, which cannot be reflected through the medium of thought or preconceived ideas. Right Concentration is free from illusion and its concomitants, attraction and rejection, greed and aversion. The Right Concentration begins with the effort of mind directing towards the wholesome objects and ends in the mind’s complete concentration, rapture and undisturbed calm. Majjhima-Nikāya says: "Right rapture of concentration is when, divested of lust and divested of wrong dispositions, an almsman (Buddhist bhiksu) develops, and dwells in the first ecstasy with all its zest and satisfaction, a state bred of aloofness and not divorced from observation and reflection. By laying to rest observation and reflection, he develops and dwells in inward serenity, in the focusing of heart, in the zest and satisfaction of the second ecstasy, which is divorced from observation and reflection and is bred of concentration – passing thence to the third and fourth ecstasies” (Radhakrishnan and Moore, 1957: 278).

Thus, Buddhism as an ethical system that shows the way to attain the final goal of human life, a life conquering the problem of suffering, through the Noble Eightfold Path.
The Noble Eightfold Path represents the origin of the permanent happiness free from all external disturbances. It is not only the means but also a way to remove the causes of imperfection for those who wish to tread the path of *nirvāṇa*. The Buddhist ethics is training for different aspects of a personality, a process of self-purification of all impurities through the bearing of a highly moral conduct and observing the essence of morality. The Noble Eightfold path is an integrated ethical formulation directing the way which leads to the annihilation of suffering. The principle that underlines the ethics of Buddhism is to make the end of suffering and complete release from suffering.

The Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddhism, discussed above is analyzed into categorizing as three aspects of Wisdom, Morality, and Mental Culture to purge all evil forces for the attainment of ultimate peace. They are grouped as:

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The above mentioned table shows that — i) wisdom is represented by right understanding and right thought. This category of the eightfold part is the mental attitude, reflection and knowledge, — ii) Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood represent the principles of morality. This category is the feeling, impulse and action, — iii) The Mental Culture is represented by Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration. This category is the will power, equanimity and concentration. Wisdom in its highest form is enlightenment; in its beginning it is the honest striving after truth, the unbiased recognition of the laws of life as far as they are in the reach of average human experience. As such it is called Right View or Right Understanding, and it is significant for the spiritual attitude of Buddhism that it regards right understanding as the first step on the path of liberation, without which neither morality nor mental culture can have any value. Morality is the practical expression of Right Understanding. When a person acts according to certain rules, merely because he is afraid of punishment or he expects a certain reward, his so-called morality has no value. According to the Buddhist point of view, morality is not the cause but the outcome of our spiritual attitude. The harmony between this attitude and our actions, i.e., our inner truthfulness, is the real meaning of morality. And it is on account of this that Mental Culture is not possible without morality, because Mental Culture cannot be attained without harmony. Mental Culture is harmony in the highest perfection. It is necessary to develop simultaneously all these three aspects of Noble Eightfold Path.