Chapter-2

THE BUDDHA’S TEACHINGS

THE BUDDHA

The canonical texts in Theravada Buddhism do not present a systematic biography of the Buddha. The disciples during and immediately after the time of the Buddha did not feel a need of compiling the Buddha's biography because everyone at that time was familiar with it and was admonished repeatedly by the Master himself that the Dhamma be first emulated. The life of the Buddha is the exemplar of the Dhamma he preached. The Buddha once said, "One who sees the Dhamma sees me. One who sees me sees the Dhamma". The Buddha in the course of giving discourses or prescribing disciplinary rules for bhikkhus refers occasionally to his personal life. Through the process of gleaning such scattered references in the Canon his life became known to us but limited extent.

Gleaning data concerning the life of the Buddha scattered in the early Pali texts require a careful approach. It is true that research has not yet reached a consensus with regard to the stratification of the Pali Canon considered as the earliest available source of material as a whole. In other words, the study of the Buddha's biography even within the Pali tradition involves the ascertainment of the philological development of texts from which material is drawn. Literary evidence shows that attempts were made only several centuries after the demise of the Buddha to compile a systematic and consistent

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46 S.ii.98; Thag.ii.117.
biography of the Buddha including the genealogy of the Sakya clan\textsuperscript{48} based on the scattered data found in the canonical texts as well as on the materials, perhaps, copied from other sources with the interaction among Buddhists and non-Buddhists. Such attempts appear to envisage two results:

(1) To familiarize the life of Gotama Buddha, to those who knew little or nothing about him in person; and

(2) To exalt the Teacher by way of adding extraordinary happenings supposedly associated with his life. Its result can be seen in works like the \textit{Nidanakatha} of the \textit{Jataka-atthakatha}\textsuperscript{49}, a text, long considered as the standard biography of the Buddha in Theravada Buddhism.

Two types of methodology have emerged up to date concerning the study of the Buddha's biography. A group of scholars, including some Japanese, has made attempts to construct a life of the Buddha based on the earliest available sources. They employed the methodology of carefully examining the sources in the light of comparative studies and with the use of other external materials, such a relevant epigraphically archaeological and other data that may shed light on the formation and development of the Buddhist texts.\textsuperscript{50} These are preconditions for a study of the life of Gotama Buddha. Such a methodology will certainly bring out the personality of Gotama Buddha portrayed by the earliest available sources. The underlying purpose of this approach was to discard and dismantle

\textsuperscript{48} DA.258-262, SnA.352-356.
\textsuperscript{49} JA.1-94.
imaginary elements as much as possible, so that Gotama Buddha would emerge essentially as a human being closer to his times without any grab of myths.

On the other hand, some attempts have also been made to construct a life of the Buddha from the fragments scattered in various sources and by disregarding the textual stratification. Scholars are aware that this methodology, even if dealing with the Nikayas, will invariably involve myths surrounding the life of Gotama Buddha.\textsuperscript{51} This approach is significant in the findings that have more religious and ethical value. The Buddhavamsa, one of the later canonical texts, is exceptionally one of a kind, and the most appropriate texts to use for the study of the biography of the Buddha. It is so for these reasons.

First and foremost, it contains probes into the past existences of Gotama Buddha from the time of Dipankara Buddha from whom the ascetic Sumedha received a definite assurance (\textit{niyata-vivarana}). He made a resolve (\textit{abhinihara}) in front of him to become a Bodhisatta. Since then, by fulfilling the perfections (\textit{param²}) for an immeasurable length of time; he finally attained Buddhahood. Second, the number of past Buddhas is twenty-four as against the six pervious Buddha mention-read in the Canon.\textsuperscript{52} Third, it gives a list of ten perfections (\textit{paramî}) that must be fulfilled by the Gotama Bodhisatta for the attainment of Buddhahood.

All these concepts associated with the career of Gotama Bodhisatta are not mentioned in the Canon, except for the fact that the Buddha sometimes referred to himself as the Bodhisatta before his enlightenment\textsuperscript{53} and also for the mentioning of his

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[52] D.ii.1.
\item[53] M.i.19
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former existences are made in the Jataka tales. Later, canonical texts such as the Buddhavamsa, the Cariyapitaka give detailed accounts of some of the perfections the Gotama Bodhisatta had practiced. Siddhattha Gotama was born a Sakyan prince to Suddhodana as his father and Mahamaya as the mother. He led a luxurious life as a child. Not satisfied with the material comfort, he renounced the world at the age of twenty-nine and went in quest of an answer to the human suffering. During his time, practicing of austerity was given prominence in ancient India society. It was accepted and regarded as the way to the truth to gain Brahman-ship, and Siddhattha Gotama, also followed the way of austerity to the extreme and practiced several austerities for six years. While struggling to find a solution to the problem of human suffering, Siddha-the Gotama took to the method of training of varied nature prevailing at that time. It is impossible for anyone to imagine the mental and physical strain he had undergone during the six years of his austerities. Finally, on realizing the ineffectiveness of those practices, and on taking up a new way, the ‘Middle Way’ eventually, he gained Enlightenment, Buddhahood at the age of thirty-five. Since then, he has continued to propagate his doctrine for the next forty-five years, until his death at the age of eighty.

Early Buddhist sources persistently depict Gotama Buddha as an ideal human being. He was a lover of silence and led a simple life uncharacteristic of any supernormal being. All those who followed him respected him not only because he was a teacher, but also because he was a human being par excellence. This sentiment is shared by many as can be gathered from such epithets and attributes given only to the Buddha as

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54 M.i.96; Ibid.299.  
55 D.ii.69.
purisattama⁵⁶, isisattama⁵⁷, sabbasattanamuttama⁵⁸, appatippu-ggala⁵⁹, devamanussa settha⁶⁰, sadevakassa lokassa agga, etc.⁶¹

It appears to be a natural course of development as Buddhism expanded its influence far and wide by making influential personages its patrons. However, these questions, - who this Buddha was; was he a human or a superhuman - were thought to have arisen from among his disciples all this could have led to the consideration of a turning point of the development of the Buddha concept.

On the occasion when a Brahmin named Dona on seeing the Buddha’s footprints asked the question, who he was? Gotama Buddha declares that he is not a deva, nor a gandhabba, nor a yakkha, nor a human, but a Buddha.⁶² According to Vinaya Mahavagga, it is reported that soon after his attainment of Buddha-hood, on his way to meet the five ascetics at Isipatana, He met Upaka to whom He proclaimed thus, ”I am the one who is worthy of being revered in this world; I am the supreme teacher; I am the only one who has attained the most perfect enlightenment.”⁶³ Such instances suggest that Buddhological development was in the making within the Canon itself, which become clear when compared with the early notion of the Buddha's personality. People respected and paid homage to the Buddha as a human who reached perfection in virtues and wisdom attainable by human. The thera Udayi states that people pay homage to a human

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⁵⁶ Sn.544, Thag.623.
⁵⁷ Thag.1240.
⁵⁸ Thag.623.
⁵⁹ D.ii 287.
⁶⁰ It.100.
⁶¹ A.i.17.
⁶² A.i.346.
⁶³ Vin.12.
who attained Buddhahood. The Buddha in early phases was conceived of as a human, but he has now lost the human personality (manussadhuta) and declares himself to be a Buddha: his appellation applicable to anyone who is awakened or enlightened as mentioned in the early strata of the Canon. It is the notion of "Buddha" which now comes to the fore and is pursued for definition. In passing, the Buddha's assertion to the Brahmin, ‘Dona,’ may be interpreted to mean that he is no more subjected to rebirth like any one of those who are still bound by the root causes of existence.

The canonical texts contain some descriptions about the physical appearance of the Buddha. The Brahmin Sonadanda, who had never seen the Buddha before, but later, on seeing Him, had to confirm that what people described by Him was true and accurate. He described His appearance in the following manner: - ‘Indeed, the Samana Gotama is handsome, good-looking, inspiring trust, gifted with lotus-like complexion, in complexion similar to the Brahma’s, radiant like that of the Brahma. He is of no mean appearance… His voice is cultivated and so is his way of expressing himself, which is urbane, elegant, clear and precise’. Such descriptions about the Buddha indicate that he was a person who could command respect from others even just by appearance.

The Brahmayu sutta gives probably the most comprehensive descriptions of the Buddha’s demeanor and manner in conducting himself in His daily routine: -it is said that He walks setting out with his right foot first, neither too quickly nor too slowly; when he walks, only the lower part of his body oscillates, and he walk at ease, with no bodily effort; when he turns to look, he does so with his whole body; He does not walk looking

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64 Thag.318.
65 D i.103.
66 M ii.333.
around; He looks a plough-yoke’s length before him. When he enters indoor, he does not lower his body or bend it forward or backward; He turns round neither too far from his seat nor too near it; He does not lean on the seat with his hand; He does not throw his body down on to the seat. The Sutta also gives the description of His conducts with regard to receiving of water, handling of alms bowl, acceptance of meals, his robes, manner of preaching to the audience, every kind of manner in details. Furthermore, the Buddha is endowed with skin of golden hue (suvanna-vanna). Some of these physical characteristics are incorporated into the thirty-two physical marks of a Great Man (dvattimsamahapuri-salakkhana).67

The concept of Great Man (Mahapurisa) is pre-Buddhistic and early Buddhism does not subscribe to this idea of the physical characteristics only. Mahpurisa in early Buddhism is a person of high spiritual advancement and can be equated with a worthy person (arahant). For example, the Buddha speaks of a great man (Mahapurisa) in the following manner in reply to the question posed by the Brahmin youth Tissa Metteyya: ‘He who is free from agitation, whose actions are pure and good in sensual pleasures; is void of craving; never loses mindfulness; becomes calm and extinguished. He who understands the alternatives right away, without having any trouble, it is Him, I call a great man (Maapurisa)68 The Buddha on another occasion tells Sariputta that a great man (Mhapurisa) is so named on account of the emancipation of the mind (vimutta cittata).69 However, as time passed, ‘Mahapurisa’ came to be used for a person with specific number of physical marks and would be destined to become either a universal monarch

67 D.iii.116.
68 Sn.40.
69 S.iii.137.
(Cakkavatti) or a Buddha.\textsuperscript{70} Both, these two individuals are endowed with the thirty-two bodily marks that distinguish them from ordinary beings. The \textit{Lakkhana Sutta} of \textit{Dighanikaya} provides the best example of the Buddhist interpretation of this concept. It states in no uncertain terms that the physical marks of these two individuals are due to the good deeds done in the past and can only be maintained in the present life by performing good deeds. This interpretation signifies ethical correlations between morally commendable deeds and the bodily marks. The thirty-two bodily marks of a Great Man are as follows:\textsuperscript{71}

1. He has feet with a level tread.

2. On the soles of his feet wheels appear with a thousand spokes, with rims and hubs, in every way complete.

3. He is projecting heels.

4. He has long fingers.

5. He has soft and tender hands and feet.

6. He has fingers and toes evenly spaced.

7. His ankles are over the exact middle of the treading.

8. His legs are shaped like those of antelopes.

9. While standing without stopping, he can touch and rub his knees with both hands at once.

10. His privities are within a sheath.

11. He has a golden complexion.

12. The texture of his skin is that no dust or dirt can lodge in it.

\textsuperscript{70}D ii.137, iii.47, A.i.107.  
\textsuperscript{71}D iii 116.
13. His body hair grows singly, one only in each pore.

14. Each hair is straight, blue-black and curling to the right at its tip.

15. His body frame is straight.

16. His body has seven convex surfaces.

17. The upper part of his body is well built like that of a lion.

18. He has no hollow between his shoulder blades.

19. He has the symmetrical proportions of a banyan tree, his stretch being the same as his height.

20. The curve of his shoulders is symmetrical.

21. He has an exquisite, acutely sensitive sense of taste.

22. His jaws are like those of a lion.

23. He has forty teeth.

24. He has even teeth.

25. There are no interstices between his teeth.

26. His teeth are sparkling white.

27. His tongue is long and flexible.

28. His voice is like that of the Brahma and is mellifluous like that of a Karavika bird.

29. His eyes are intensely blue.

30. His eyelashes are long and shapely like those of a cow.

31. Between his eyebrows grows soft white hair like cotton-down.

32. His head is shaped like a royal turban.
The rise of Buddhology is considered to be of a gradual growth and belongs to a late stage of development in the Canon. When the Buddha's apotheosis began in the Theravada tradition, it is difficult to determine. G.C. Pande writes: 'the idea of a being incomparable superior to all creatures, including gods, actually or apparently, according to a fixed norm (Dhammata) solely out of compassion, is without parallel.'  

When the teachings of the Buddha spread gradually among the masses, at least, along the river Gangers, in India and the Sangha became institutionalized, it is easily imaginable that Gotama the Teacher became naturally a focus of attention. Good reputation (kittisadda) about him spread not only among the converts of Buddhism, but also among some of the religious teachers and philosophers of the day. The Brahman Brahmayu once asked his pupil Uttara to go to the Buddha and verify what people said about him was true or not. Further, kings and merchants of the caliber of King Bimbisara, Pasenadi Kosala, Anathapin-dika, Visakha, and many others announced to become followers of the Buddha and this would have certainly elevated his status of Gotama Buddha as a teacher.

Often people were unable to see the Master in person: naturally, a desire was strongly felt among them to find out the identity of the Buddha. It was in these historical backdrops that the Buddha's disciples, while preaching the Dhamma, would have related rather in a eulogistic manner; and perhaps, it could also be on the strong request of the audiences themselves for a detailed knowledge of who the Teacher was, what qualities he

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73 M.ii. 333.
74 Dutt, Nalinaksha, Early history of the spread of Buddhism and the Buddhist schools, p.50, Rajesh Publications, New Delhi, 1980.
possessed, his parents, place of birth, etc., to the listeners. Apotheosis of the Master must have had a simple beginning evolved primarily out of a sheer necessity: on the other hand, it is human nature the desire to pay respect and honor one’s teacher which could have added to the quest for a more detailed account of the personality of the Buddha. Moreover, the Buddha became more and more apotheosized as time advanced, because to the Buddhists, he was the teacher who realized, understood, lived by the Dhamma, and the only master to guide them to tread on the correct path leading to the emancipation from dukkha.

Epithets given to the Buddha provide a good glimpse into the historical development of his personality. The sum total of the Buddha's personality in the Canon can be found in the formula of the Nine Virtues or Titles, which is often cited in the following manner: 'Iti pi so bhagava araham sammasambuddho vijjacaranasampanno sugato lokavidu anuttaropisadamasarathi sathhadevamanussnam buddho bhagavati.' This formula conveys almost all the aspects of religious-ethical and intellectual perfection, compassion shown to all beings, highest knowledge attainable, leadership, and other virtues of the Buddha; thus showing the entire nature and function of a Buddha. These epithets of the Buddha portray his personality in different aspects. After discussing the life of the Buddha, we will keep on discus His fundamental and important aspects of the teachings.

75 D.i.44;iii.3; M.ii.7;iii.11;S.i.298; A.ii.2.
THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL STABILITY

Within forty-five years of accomplished mission, the Buddha had taught several discourses. Those discourses have been classified into Pitaka, Basket or Nikaya, collections. Among the teachings, we will focus on only one which is the longest and covered all the teachings he taught within 45 years. The discourse is nothing but Mahaparinibbana sutta of Digha Nikaya. At the beginning of the Maaparinibbana sutta we found the dialogue between the Buddha and Vassakara, chief minister of Magadha. The sutta relates the following story: when the Buddha was in Rajagaha, the capital of Magadha, Ajatasattu, the king of Magadha, wanted to invade and overpower the Vajjians territory. He sent his chief minister, Vassakara to the Buddha to inform Him of his military ambition. The king instructed his chief minister to bear carefully in mind whatever the Buddha would declare for he knew that the Tathagatas never lie.

From this statement we could imagine the political situation and the form of governments. We could say two systems of government existed in India during the time of the Buddha. One was monarchical and the other was republican. The monarchical system was followed in the territories like Kosala, Magadha and Vatas, while the territories like Vajji and Malla were considered republican federations.

When the king's message was delivered, the Buddha asked Venerable Ananda whether the Vajjians still adhered to the seven welfare condition. Ven.Ananda's answer was in the affirmative. The Buddha addressed Vassakara that so long as these conditions shall continue to exist among the Vajjians, so long as the Vajjians shall be well instructed in those conditions, they may be expected to prosper and not decline.
The Buddha instructed seven principles of social and political stabilities to the Vajjians as follow:

1. They should hold regular and frequent assemblies.
2. They should meet in harmony, break up in harmony, and carry on their business in harmony.
3. They should not authorize what has not been authorize already, and not abolish what has been authorized but proceed according to what has been authorized by their ancient tradition.
4. They should honor, respect, revere, and salute the elders among them, and consider them worth listening to.
5. They should not do forcibly abduct other's wives and daughters and compel them to live with them.
6. They should honor, respect, revere, and salute the Vajjian shrines at home and abroad, not withdrawing the proper support made and given before.
7. They should offer proper provision for the safety of arahants, so that such arahants may come in the future to live there and those already there may dwell in comfort.\textsuperscript{76} These seven principles are part and parcel of the Buddhist traditions.

\textsuperscript{76} D.ii.62-4.
THE FRUITITS OF AN IMMORAL AND MORAL LIFE

A study of this discourse gives us a fair idea of the socio-ethical and religious life of the lay devotees. The subject which may be grouped under "ethical" or "moral" contains simple modes of good life and moral conduct. Ethics is generally understood as the inquiry into rules of human conduct, ways of life and basic terms used in the evaluation of human behavior, such as good and bad, right and wrong. The ethics of a particular community, cultural group or a religious system can be empirically studied by the methods of social science to discover what its value is and why these values have come into being. Ethics also signifies a mode of philosophical inquiry which attempts to answer certain general questions about the meaning of moral terms and criteria of moral evaluation.

Buddhism admits the fact that there is no end to an individual after his death. From the Buddhist point of view, one has to take the responsibility for one's own actions. In other words volitional acts (kamma), retribution (vipakka) and rebirth (punabhava) are part and parcel of Buddhist ethics; where volition plays an important role as a deciding factor. The Pali canon has used numerous evaluative ethical or moral terms such as, Kusala-akusala (wholesome and unwholesome), samma miccha78 (right and wrong), sucarita-duccarita79 (good behavior and bad behavior), kalyana-Papaka80 (good and evil), dussila-Silavanta81 (moral and immoral). The Culakammavibhaga Sutta of the Majjhimanikaya furnishes a good exposition of men's good or bad intentional behavior as

78 Dh.v.163.
79 Ibid.v.56.
80 J.V.p.238.
81 D.ii.72.
a norm. It states briefly and clearly as follow "beings are owners of their actions; heirs of their actions; they originate from their actions, are bound to their actions; have their as their refuge. It is action that distinguishes beings as inferior and superior." It implies that one should be prepared to bear the consequences of one's action.

The principles of the five precepts are considered as the Buddhist social ethics which have been subjected to discussion as a basic proposition. In the short section on virtue (Sulasila) of Brahmaajala Sutta, the five precepts have been demonstrated to establish the healthy existence of society as well as personal spiritual development. According to Buddhism, even animals have rights to live just like human beings do. Therefore, there is no excuse for anybody to deprive them of their legitimate rights to live. While leading a righteous life, one is required to protect one's own property. To loot or plunder the property that belongs to another is an anti-social activity. Committing adultery without considering the morality of married life, leads to social problems. Misused of speech also leads to social crisis. Use of intoxicants and drugs cause serious mental distortion and confusion.

The Buddha was always very particular about social harmony as well as social welfare. The mutual social relationship is pointed out as an institute. Duties and responsibilities of Buddhist community could be found in detail in Singalovada Sutta of DN.  

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82 M.iii.243.  
83 D.i.4.  
84 D.iii.145.
While the Buddha was staying at *Pataligama*, He taught the fruits of an immoral and moral life to the people. There are five kinds of demerit of not following the moral precepts as-

1. He falls into great poverty due to sloth;
2. His evil repute gets noised outside;
3. Whatever society, he enters- whether of nobles, *Brahmansa*, heads of houses or men of a religious order he enters shyly and being confused;
4. He is full of anxiety when he dies; and
5. On the dissolution of the body after death, he is reborn into an unhappy state of suffering.

On the other hand, there are five fold gains of moral precepts

1. He acquires great wealth through his industry;
2. Good reputation is spread outside;
3. Whatever society, he enter, he does so confident and self possessed;
4. He dies without anxiety; and
5. After death, he is reborn in some happy state.\(^{85}\)

By focusing on the results of moral and immoral practice, an individual or a community or a society creates its own destiny in a positive as well as negative position.

**SOCIO-CULTURAL CUSTOMS**

The social manners are a very important part of the cultural life of the community. Respect to elders was a part and parcel of the Buddhist ethics. It was decreed that

\(^{85}\) D.ii.72-73.
anyone who respects and courteously reverses the aged received four benefits such as getting more life, beauty, happiness and power. Stretch out one's feet towards important persons was considered bad manners. In the Pali texts we found the modes of address to one another. The king was always addressed as 'raja' or 'Maharaja' by all and even by the Buddha. A respected person was usually addressed as 'ayya'. 'Ayya' was also used when a wife called her husband. 'Ayya' was used for an older lady or the mistress of house. 'Ayyaputta' was addressed to the prince. 'Bhante' was another used in the sense of 'sir' or 'venerable sir' addressed to the Buddha or the monks. 'Bhane' was probably used for the inferior persons such as the king addressing his subjects. Another for of polite address was 'avuso'. The term 'tata' was used by a son for a father, or by a father for a son or by a teacher for a pupil or by an older monk for a younger one, or for the near relatives. The vocative 'bho' was usually applied amongst equals or for inferiors.

In Mahaparinibbana sutta, the Buddha asked His monks how to address one another later He has gone. One of the instructions to His disciples that after His death, the monks should no longer address each other indiscriminately as "friend" (avuso). The

86 Dh.109.
87 Vin.i.179.
88 D.i.50; Vin.i.312.
89 D.i.51,52; M.ii.128; Si.68,70,71.
90 M.ii.102;149; Vin.i.186,191;iii.135; Si.iv.326; A.i.206.
91 Vin.ii.215.
92 Vin.ii.257; M.i.125; A.v.93.
93 D.i.92; Vin.i.232.
94 D.i.179; ii.61; 130; Vin.i.76;iii.248; S.iv.88;
95 D.ii.159; Vin.i.240; iii.249;iv.157;
96 D.ii.151; ii. 130,133; Vin.i.9;ii.302; M.i.171; iii.247.
97 Vin.i.78; S.i.124;
98 Vin.i.179; D.ii.340; M.ii.75.
100 S.ii.235.
101 S.ii.227.
102 D.ii.123;130; M.i.16;
senior monks should address the junior ones as "friend" or by their names, while the junior ones should use "venerable sir" (bhante).\(^\text{103}\) This rule affirmed reverence according to seniority in the order independently of the personal qualities that monks or nuns may have. When we read the whole sutta we have found another term for the mode of addressing one another such as 'Raja bhante',\(^\text{104}\) 'evam bho',\(^\text{105}\) 'raja bho gotama',\(^\text{106}\) 'sutam metam bhante',\(^\text{107}\) 'jitamhavata bho ambkaya',\(^\text{108}\) 'bho ananda',\(^\text{109}\) 'api avuso amhamkam sattharam janasi',\(^\text{110}\) 'ama avuso janami',\(^\text{111}\) 'gaccha avuso',\(^\text{112}\) 'evam bhante'\(^\text{113}\) etc. By taking into consideration these terms we could conclude that the socio-cultural relation have been so polite in the rankings they paid respect.

**BUDDHIST STRATIFICATION OF SOCIETY**

Now we shall shed light on the individual or person (puggala) with respect to the classification in the society, and the fundamental and important aspects of the teaching delivered by the Buddha. As mentioned in the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta* it was only toward the end of His life that the Buddha stated the prevalence of His teaching in the world. To promote the long duration time would depend upon the accurate preservation of these factors and their being practiced by his followers.

\(^{103}\) D.ii.127.
\(^{104}\) Ibid.61.
\(^{105}\) Ibid.61.
\(^{106}\) Ibid.62.
\(^{107}\) Ibid.62.
\(^{108}\) Ibid.82.
\(^{109}\) Ibid.123.
\(^{110}\) Ibid.133.
\(^{111}\) Ibid.133.
\(^{112}\) Ibid.130.
\(^{113}\) Ibid.130
It is very interesting that the Buddhist stratification of individual is totally different from that of the Brahmaminical classification in society. The Buddha classified the individual not by birth but by deeds. The Brahmaminical thinkers have made a social classification according to the birth of a man, but the Buddhist classification is made on the basis of the level of a man’s spiritual development. Rejecting the Brahmaminical claims of superiority by birth, the Buddha pointed out directly through spiritual value that one does not become a Brahamana or Sudra by birth, but it is by one’s deeds that one becomes superior. Thus, it is because of one’s good deeds that one becomes superior and not by caste or clan. ‘Na jaccavasalo hoti, Na jaccabrahmanokammuna vasalo hoti, kammuna hoti brahmano.’

While the Buddha and his community of bhikkhus were staying at Nadika village, one day, on their way to Vesali Ven. Ananda approached the Buddha and said, “Lord, here in Nadika, Bhikkhu Salha and the Bhikkhuni Nanda have passed away. Likewise, so have the layman Sudatta and the laywoman Sujata; and others - layman Kakudha, Kalinga, Nikata, Katissabha, Tuttha, Santuttha, Bhodda, and Subhadda have all passed away too. What would be their destiny, Lord? What would be their future state?” The Buddha replied, “Ananda, Bhikkhu Salha, through the destruction of the asava, moral intoxicants, taints, being an arahat, has attained the taint-free deliverance of mind in this very life, (arahataphala samadhi) and deliverance through wisdom, (arahattaphala Pañña), having directly known and realized it by himself through Magga Insight.”

“As for Bhikkhuni Nanda, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters, samyojana, which lead to rebirth in the lower sensuous realms, is an Anagami. She has arisen

114 Sn.297.
spontaneously in the Brahma realm; and being an Anagami, a Never-returner there is no possibility for her of returning from that realm to existence in any form or in any other realm. She will finally pass away in the realization of Nibbana”

“The layman Sudatta, through the complete destruction of the three fetters (self-believe, doubt, and faith in the efficacy of rituals and observances), and the lessening of lust, hatred, and delusion, has become a Once-returner (Sakadagami) and is bound to make an end of suffering after having returned but once more to this world.” “As for the laywoman Sujata, she has become a stream-enterer (Sotapanna) through the destruction of the three fetters and is safe from falling into the states of misery, assured, and bound for Enlightenment.”

These evidences exhibit the different spiritual levels an individual can achieve by good deeds and practice.

There are twelve kinds of persons in the world according to the Buddhist stratification of the society. They are-

1. **Duggati ahetuka**, being reborn woeful course and without root conditions.
2. **Sugati ahetuka**, being reborn happy course and without root conditions.
3. **Dvihetuka**, being reborn with only two root conditions.
4. **Tihetuka**, being reborn with three root conditions.
5. **Sotapatti magga**
6. **Sotapatti phala**
7. **Sakadagami magga**
8. **Sakadagami phala**
9. **Anagami magga**

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115 D.ii.78-9.
10. Anagami phala

11. Arahata magga and


The first four are called Putthujana, worldling or ordinary men. Any layman or monk possessed by all the ten fetters (samyojanas) is subject to or bound to the round of rebirths since they have not yet reached any of the four stages of magga. But the last eight are called Ariya puggala, noble persons who have realized one of the eight stages of holiness.

Buddhist society can be divided into two: secular and spiritual. In secular division, there are two primary groups: laity (gahatha) and monk (pabbajita). The Pabbajja Sutta of Suttanipata\(^{116}\) mentions that the life of laity is full of problems, sambādhoyam gharāvāso and for the Pabbajita it is just like the free open space, abbhokāsova pabbajjā.

The nature of the laity or gahatha and a monk or pabbajjita as given the discourses: - The laity looks for a wife and children (puttadāram pariyesati), servants (dāsidāsam), fields, bulls and lands (khettavatthum), silver and gold (hirañña suvannam), silver and money (jātarūparajatā), cattle and animals (gavāsavalam). Besides, it is the nature of laity to be always searching for sensual pleasure (kāmabhogino). They may wear white cloths (odātavatthavaso); but they still sustain their wife, sons and daughter (dāraposī). They are selfish and always think of themselves (mamāyito) and lead an attached life.

\(^{116}\) Sn.340.
The nature of monk or pabbajita is that having discarded the wife and children (puttadāram pahāya), having discarded the servants (dāsidāsam pahāya) having discarded the fields and lands (khetta vatthum pahāya), having discarded the bulls (hiraññasuvannam pahāya), having discarded the silver (jātarūparajatam pahāya), having discarded the cattle, animals (gavāssavalavam pahāya). They renounce the household life and become the members of the Order, 'agārasmā anāgāriyam pabbajati'. They have also abandoned sensual pleasures (nikkāmino) and wear yellow clothes (kāsāyāni vatthāni). They have abandoned their wife, sons and daughters (puttadāram pahāya). They are not selfish (amāmo) and when compared at the spiritual level, a Pabbajita is superior to a gahatha. The pabbajita leads a detached life, like ‘the drops of water on a lotus leaf’ 'Bhikkhu yathā poacher vāribindū'. An example has been given in the Dhmmika Sutta.\textsuperscript{117}

A further two divisions can be made to their spiritual levels- Puthujjana and Sāvaka. Puthujjana consist of two groups; - one - Upasakā and Upāsikā, the other - bhikkhu and bhikkhunī. They are spiritually inferior to Sāvaka. Puthujjana is defined as one who is separated from others and is selfish. In restricted sense, Sāvaka, means ‘hearer’ i.e. ‘disciple’. They are referred to as the eight kinds of noble disciples who are all spiritually superior to Puthujjana. They can be called Ariya and Sappurisa.

Sappurisa will not die without becoming a sotāpanna in this very life. To overcome from puthujanabhūmi to Sāvakabhūmi, one must have five faculties called the qualities of sapurisa. They are (1) saddhā, faith in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha on knowledge (2) vīriya, energetic, (3) sati, mindfulness, (4) samādhi, concentration and (5) sn.337.

\textsuperscript{117} Sn.337.
pañña, wisdom. To fulfill these qualities, one has to perfect in accordance with saddhānusārī (knowledge of faith) and dhammānusārī (knowledge of dhamma). To become sappurisa one must have these three aspects also. (1) Patirūpadesavāca, he must live in the suitable place, (2) kalyānamitta, he must have good friends and (3) indriyasamvara, and he must restrain his faculties. These are the necessary characteristics of sappurisa.

It is generally believed that puthujana upasakās and upāsikas are spiritually inferior to puthujana bhikkhus and bhikkhunis. As mentioned earlier about the nature of these two groups, we can decide that bhikkhus and bhikkhunis are superior to pajamas and upāsikās. Spirituality does not depend on whether he is a gahatha or pabbajita in puthujana level. As mentioned in Mahāparinibbāna Sutta we learn about the nature and the custom of man that reflected at the time of the Buddha. Whenever someone dies people would come and ask the Buddha about the possible next life of the deceased, i.e. the destination or next existence of that person. This was a common question forwarded by not only the lay persons, but also the disciple monks.

Consequently, the Buddha said to Ven. Ananda, “Ananda, there is nothing strange that human beings should die. But if each time this happens, they should come to the Tathagata and ask about them in this manner; it would be troublesome to me. Therefore, Ananda, I will give you the teaching called ‘the Mirror of the Dhamma’. The noble disciple who is fully endowed with this Mirror of Magga Insight can, if he so desire, declare of himself: ‘there is no more rebirth for me in hell nor as an animal or ghost, nor
in any realm of woe. A stream-enterer is I, safe from falling into the states of misery; assured am I, and bound for Enlightenment.”

The Mirror of Dhamma possessed by the noble disciples are that he has unshakable perfect faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sanghas and he possesses virtues that are dear to the Noble Ones, complete and perfect, spotless and pure, which are liberating, praised by the wise, uninfluenced (by worldly concerns), and favorable to concentration of mind. To be savaka one must possess four qualities prescribed in the discourses.

(1) One must have faith in Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, based on understanding, identical with ākāravati saddhā(aveccapasāda).

(2) One should associate with worthy one (sappurisa samseva); listening to the Dhamma (saddhammasavana), one should live mindfully (yoni somanasikāra), and live according to the Dhamma (dhammanudhamma-patipatti).

(3) He is usually endowed with long life span (āyu), good complexion (vanana), happiness (sukha) and leadership (adhipati).

(4) Those are on the sāvaka plane will be born in good planes after death and they would be destined to Nibbana (avinipātadhammo niyato sambo dhiparāyano).

These are the qualities of Sotapanna. So to be asāvaka one has at least to become a Sotāpanna. Puthujjana does not have these qualities. This is the difference between Puthujjana and Sāvaka in qualifications.

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118 D.ii.79.
119 Ibid.80.
Again, Sāvaka can be divided into two: Sekha and Asekha. So, according to Buddhism, there are three individuals at the spiritual level. They are Puthujjana, Sekha, and Asekha. Sekha is the person who pursues the three kinds of training (sikkha) and has reached one of the four supermundane paths or the three lower fruitions. Sotapanna, Sakadagami and Anagami are Sekha. Puthujjana is one who is neither a noble learner, nor one perfect in learning (nevasekha nasekha). Of the three, Puthujjana is at the lowest at spiritual.

There are seven attained levels for Sekha:

1. The One who had realized the Path of Stream-Winning,
2. The One who had realized the Fruition of Stream-Winning,
3. The One who had realized the Path of Once-Return,
4. The One who had realized the Fruition of Once-Return,
5. The One who had realized the Path of Non-Return,
6. The One who had realized the Fruition of Non-Return,
7. The One who had realized the Path of Holiness.

(1) Sotapanna, the Stream-Winner, is the lowest of the eight noble disciples. If a man had eradicated fetters, i.e. (1) personality belief (sakkāyaditthi), (2) skeptical doubt (vicikicchā), (3) attachment to mere rules and ritual (sīlabbataparāmasa), he becomes Sotapanna. He has already entered the stream to Nibbana. He is no more subject to rebirth in the lower worlds, being firmly established, lay destined to full enlightenment. Such a man is called a Sotapanna.
(2) *Sakadagami*, once-returner, through the Path of Once-Returning, one becomes nearly free from the 4th and 5th fetters, (4) sensuous craving (*kāmacchanda*),
(5) Ill-will (*byāpāda*).

(3) *Anāgāmi*, the non-returner, through the Path of Non-returning one becomes fully free from the above-mentioned 4th and 5th fetters.

(4) *Arahata*, the Holy One, through the path of Holiness one further becomes free from the 5 higher fetters (6) craving for fine-material existence (*ruparāga*), (7) craving for Immaterial existence (*aruparāga*), (8) Conceit (*māna*), (9) Restlessness (*uddacca*) (10) Ignorance (*avijjā*).

*Asekha* is a disciple perfected in training, one beyond training. *Asekha* is another name for the Arahat and he has reached the perfection in higher moral training, higher mind training and higher wisdom training and needs no longer to train himself. There is a belief in the *Theravāda* tradition that when a layperson became an Arahat, either he dies on the same day, or becomes a monk. A story in the *MilindaPañha*, in the story of *Bāhiyadāruciriya*, *Udāna Pali of Khudaka Nikaya,* is relevant here. - While the Buddha was going on his rounds, Bāhiyadā-ruciriya approached the Buddha and asked to be taught the Dhamma and accordingly the Buddha did so and then left. Not long after the Buddha’s departure a cow with a young calf suddenly attacked Bāhiya and killed him instantly. On witnessing the death of Bāhiya the Buddha asked the bhikkhus to burn corpse and make a stupa in his honor. The reason the Buddha gave to the bhikkhus was that Bāhiya had attained the final goal and was to be honored. The question is - If

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120 Ud.84
Bāhiya was not killed, couldn’t he have lived a longer life? This possibility is not denied in the Pali canon. Therefore, there is no doubt that there were lay Sotāpanna, Sakadagāmi, Anāgāmi and Arahant during the time of the Buddha.

There are eight sāvakas, categories of disciples; namely, the four attainers of Magga-ñāna, and the four attainers of Phala-ñāna. Magga is the flash of Insight into Nibbāna, and Phala-ñāna is the fruition or repeated Insight into Nibbāna; and so attainers of Magga-ñāna and Phala-ñāna come in pairs. Therefore we would find this in the Pali passages beginning with yadidam cattāri purissa yugāni atthapurisa puggalā'.

The path that the Buddha taught and described is not only for monks and nuns but also for lay people. When we worship the monks, we say,"suppatipanno bhagavato sāvakasamgho", means we worship the sāvakasamgha who is endowed with suppatipanna. We worship the group of sāvaka, not puthujjana. The laity who becomes sāvaka is included in sāvakasamgha and can be respected or worshipped. Although sāvaka-samgha is quite different from bhikkhusamgha, both are equivalent to ariyasamgha. Ariyasamgha indicates both laity and monks. According to Pāli canon there is no doubt that lay people can also become an Arahant.

The Basic differences among puthujjana, sekkha and asekkha are: -

1) Puthujjana does not hear of Dhamma. Sekha had heard and learnt it. While Puthujjana is still practicing, Asekha had entirely practiced the Dhamma.

2) Puthujjana does not enter the path. Sekha is on the path. Asekha has reached destination.

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121 D.ii.80, D.iii.3, M.i.48, S.i.222, A.i.209.
3) *Puthujjana* does not know *Pañca indriya* (five faculties), *sadha, sati, vīriya, samādhai* and *paññā* in experience; *Sekha* knows these five faculties but has not experienced it fully; *Asekha* knows and experiences them thoroughly.

4) *Puthujjana* fear of death.’ *Maranabhayābhibhūto’; while *Sekha* is ‘*Amatassa dvāram āhacca tittati’*, that means he stands knocking at the door of deathlessness. As for *Asekha* ‘*amatamadhigatam’* he has achieved deathlessness.

5) *Puthujjana* remains in the *samsāra* for many long existences, while. *Sekha* would be born again for a maximum of seven times in the cycle of existence or *samara*. *Asekha* will never be born again in *samsāra*.

The Buddha, on his death bed at his last minutes, spoke to *Subha-dda*, the wandering ascetic, saying: “In whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline, there is not found the Noble Eightfold path, neither is there found a true ascetic of the first stage, who has attained the First *Magga* and *Phala* (*Sotāpanna*), the second stage, the attainment of Second *Magga* and *Phala* (*Sakadāgāmi*), the third state, the realization of Third *Magga* and *phala* (*Anāgāmi*), and the fourth stage, the realization of Final *Magga* and *Phala* (*Arahata*). But in whatsoever Dhamma and Discipline there is found the Noble Eightfold Path, there is found a true ascetic of the first, second, third and fourth degrees of Noble persons. Now, in this Dhamma and Discipline, - *Subhadda*, is found the Noble Eightfold Path; and in it alone - are also found true ascetics of the first, second, third and fourth
degrees of Noble persons. Devoid of true ascetics are the system of other teachers. But if, Subhadda, the bhikkhus live righteously, the world will not be destitute of arahants.”

**THE PATH (Sila, Samādhi and Paññā)**

The Buddhist religious experience arises as a result of following a path that is laid down by the Buddha. The hallmarks of the path are systematic and methodic. It is a well-known fact that the Buddha was a historical person who lived and died as a human being. He never claimed himself to be a messenger or an incarnation of any supernatural being. His relationship to his followers was that of a guide and a teacher. The Buddha was there for guidance; therefore, to follow or not to follow the path shown by the Buddha to be up to oneself.  

In Buddhism, the follower has to bring about his liberation on his own. Once the path has been taught, the task of the teacher is over. It also requires the follower to be quite intelligent and strong enough to take responsibility. Accordingly, the intelligent nature of the follower is a prerequisite of the Buddhist path. The Buddha emphatically says that his doctrine is for the intelligent and not for the unintelligent. According to the well known statement in the Pāli text,” the doctrine is to be realized individually by intelligent people”.  

Both knowledge and faith (paññā and saddhā) are described as necessary conditions in the practice of the Buddhist path. It is clear that the faith, Buddhism demands from the follower is qualitatively different from that required in theistic

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122 D.ii.124-5.
123 Dhammapada.276.
124 M.i.22.
125 A.ii.56.
traditions. In Buddhism, faith is marked by the acceptance of the Buddhist path on the rational conviction that it will lead to the termination of the suffering. While the follower’s sincere acceptance of the Buddha as his or her guide is important in the process, personal love or devotion to the Buddha does play a major role. The role of the Buddha as the guide and that of follower as bearing sole responsibility for his or her spiritual development precludes any possibility of religious experience to be considered as a reward from a divine being in recognition of one’s faith.

Buddhist ethics, both individual and social, become meaningful and expressive only when freedom and free will are guaranteed for the achievement of the ultimate goal, which lies beyond the causal conditioning of empirical phenomena. As there is no invisible, supernatural agent wielding his power over human destiny, Buddhism ascribes the responsibility of moulding one’s own destiny to the individual himself. For it is said in the Dhammapada:

“Only a man himself can be the master of himself: who else from outside could be his master? When the master and servant are one, then there is true help and self-possession.”126

Therefore, rejecting the idea of a Savior and the saved Buddhism accepts freedom in respect of individual’s moral behavior, making free will or freedom of choice and the corresponding responsibility as essential constituents of the path of realization. In the same vein, Buddhism emphasizes the facts of free will and moral and personal responsibility highlighted in respect of moral action with the total rejection of an external

126 Dhp.160.
agency for one’s purification to arrive at the final goal, is stated in the *Dhammapada*. “By oneself the evil is done, and it is oneself who suffers; by oneself the evil is not done, and by one’s self one becomes pure. The pure and the impure come from oneself: no man can purity another.”

When the Buddha suffered a deadly sickness in the last rain retreat at *Bheluva* village, Ven. Ananda anxiously expressed how he felt by seeing the Lord’s severe illness and fortunate for him to see the Master recovering and the little comfort in the thought that the Blessed One would not come to his final passing away until he had given some last instructions respecting the community of bhikkhus.

The Buddha told Ven. Ananda saying: “What does the community of bhikkhus expect from me, Ananda? I have set forth the Dhamma without the closed fist of a teacher. Ananda, be islands unto yourselves, refuges unto yourselves, not to seek external refuge; the Dhamma as an island, as well as a refuge, not to seek other refuge”, *attadīpā viharatha attasarānā anaṇṇasarānā dhammadīpā dhammasarānā anaṇṇasarānā*.

Depending on the listener, the path to liberation (*Vimuttimagga*) also called the path of purification (*Visuddhimagga*) has been described in the Pali text with varying degrees of emphasis and in varying degrees of detail. Basically the path is described as consisting of ‘threelfold discipline’ (*tīvīdhasikkhā*), namely Sila, Samadhi and Paññā. This classification of gradual ascent of the training is found in numerous places in the canon. Ven. Buddhaghosa composed his *Visuddhimagga* followed the selfsame

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127 Ibid.165.
128 D.ii.85.
129 S.iii.83, PS.146, A.i.234, ND.139.
method of classification and based his exposition on the canonical stanza beginning with ‘Sīle patithāya naro sapaṇṇo’\textsuperscript{130} to this effect.

The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, too, speaks of these three steps of the part of training summarily to the monks; “This is morality, concentration and wisdom. Samādhi, when based upon sila, is rich in result and of great effect. Paññā, when based upon Samādhi, is rich in result and of great effect. The mind, when developed through paññā, is utterly free from āsavas, moral intoxicants, namely, kāmāsava, the taint of sensuous desire, bhavāsava, the taint of hankering after repeated existence, and avijjāsava, and the taint of ignorance of the true nature of existence as set out in the Four Noble Truths.”\textsuperscript{131}

The Buddha repeatedly taught these three fundamental teaching six times in the six separate places on his last journey. Later in the fourth chapter He spoke of the four steps, thus including an additional one called Vimutti. It could be rightly remarked that the fourth step is but an elaboration of the third, Paññā.\textsuperscript{132}

Sīla, ‘morality’, is a mode of mind and volition manifested in speech or bodily action. It is the foundation of the whole Buddhist practice. Buddhist morality is not something negative. It does not consist in the mere not committing of evil actions, but in each instance, the clearly conscious and intentional restraint from the bad actions in question that corresponds to the simultaneous arising volition is required.

Out of the Noble Eightfold path, Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood, is called ‘genuine or natural morality’ \textit{(pakatiSīla)}, as distinguished from the

\textsuperscript{130} S.i.13, Vis.1.
\textsuperscript{131} D.ii.68.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid.102.
external rules for monks or laymen, the so called ‘prescribed morality’ (*paññattiSila*) which is karmically neutral. It is the wholesome bodily action (*kāya kamma*), wholesome verbal action (*vacikamma*) and also the purity with regard to livelihood. Virtue or the ethically blameless nature of the character is regarded as the beginning of the Buddhist path of purification.

Ven. Buddhaghosa distinguishes what type of *Sila, Samadhi* and *Paññā* in this context. He comments on *Sila* as follows: ‘*Catupārisuddhisilam sālam*’, the four kinds of morality consisting of purification are meant. They are (1) restraint with regard to the monks’ Disciplinary Code, (2) restraint of the senses, (3) purification of livelihood, (4) morality with regard to the four requisites of the monks. Virtue as a restraint (*samvarasīla*) should be understood here as restraint in five ways:

1. Restraint by the Rules of the Community (*Pātimo-kkhasamvara*),
2. Restraint by mindfulness (*satisamvara*),
3. Restraint by knowledge (*Nānasamvara*),
4. Restraint by patience (*khantīsamvara*) and
5. Restraint by energy (*vīriyasamvara*).
6. Virtue as non-transgression (*avītikkamasīla*) is the non-transgression, by body or speech, of the precepts of virtue that have been.¹³³

By fulfilling morality, one could gain the threefold higher knowledge called tevijja, ‘*Silasampatim nissāya tisso vijjā pāpunati.*’¹³⁴ They are-

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¹³³ Bhikkhupatimokkha.

¹³⁴ They are-
(1) “He remembers manifold former existences (pubbe nivāsanussati), such as one birth, two, three, four and five births…. Hundred thousand births; remembers many formations and dissolutions of worlds; ‘there I was, such name I had… and vanishing from there I entered into existence somewhere else and vanishing from there I again reappeared here.’ Thus he remembers, always together with the marks and peculiarities, many a former existence.

“With the divine eye (dibba cakkhu, yathā kammupagañāna or cutupapāta ŋāna), the pure one, he sees beings vanishing and reappearing, low and noble ones, beautiful and ugly ones, sees how beings are reappearing according to their deeds: ‘These beings, indeed, followed the evil ways in bodily actions, words, and thoughts, insulted the noble ones, held evil views, and according to their evil views they have acted. At the dissolution of their body, after death, they have appeared in lower worlds, in painful states of existence, in the world of suffering, in hell. Those other beings, however, are endowed with good action have appeared in a happy state of existence, in a heavenly world.’

(3) “Through the extinction of all cankers (āsavakkhaya) even in this very life he enters into the possession of deliverance of mind, deliverance through wisdom, after having himself understood and realized it.”

The deeper aspects of the path start with concentration (Samādhi) and culminate in wisdom (paññā). The gradual development through these two steps has been described in detail in many discourses. Samādhi, the fixing of the mind on a single object, “One-
pointedness of mind (cittassa ekaggatā), is called concentration. Concentration is one of the seven mental concomitants inseparably associated with all consciousness. Right concentration, (sammā Samādhi), as the last link of the eightfold path (magga), is defined as the four meditative absorptions (jhāna). In a wider sense, it is associated with all karmically wholesome (kusala) consciousness. Wrong concentration (micchā Samādhi) is concentration associated with all karmically unwholesome (akusala) consciousness. Wherever in the texts this term is not differentiated by ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, but the ‘right’ concentration is meant. In concentration one distinguishes three grades of intensity:

1. Preparatory concentration (parikamma Samādhi) existing at the beginning of the mental exercise.

2. ‘Neighborhood concentration’ (upacāra Samādhi), i.e. concentration ‘approaching’ but not yet attaining the 1st absorption (jhana), which in certain mental exercises is marked by the appearance of the so called ‘counter image’ (patibhāga nimitta).

3. ‘Attainment concentration’ (appanā Samādhi), i.e. that concentration which is present during the absorptions. Concentration connected with the four noble path-moments (magga) and fruition-moments (phala), is called super mundane (lokuttara), having Nibbāna as object. Any other concentration, even that of the most sublime absorptions is merely mundane (lokiya). Samatha, tranquility, is a synonym of Samādhi and avikkhepa, undistractedness.

135 M.i.44.
136 Vis.iii
Tranquility frees the mind from impurities and inner obstacles, and gives it a greater penetrative strength.

According to Sangiti Sutta\textsuperscript{137} of Dīgha Nikāya, the development of concentration (Samādhi bhāvanā) may procure a fourfold blessing: (1) present happiness through the four absorptions; (2) knowledge and vision (ñāna-dassana) that is probably identical with the ‘divine eye’ (abhiññā) through perception of light (kasina); (3) mindfulness and clear comprehension through the clear knowledge of the arising, persisting and vanishing of feelings, perceptions and thoughts; (4) extinction of all cankers (āsavakkhaya) through understanding the arising and passing away of the five groups forming the objects of clinging (khandha).

The Sāmmaññaphala Sutta\textsuperscript{138} gives the development of Samadhi that comprises of the following aspects:

1. Getting rid of the five hindrances (pañca nivarana)
2. Development of the four absorptions (jhāna)

The Sutta is the Buddha’s respond to the King Ajātasattu’s inquiry as to the benefit was obtainable by living a life of a Buddhist monk. The discourse gives an elaborate exposition of the path. The gradual development has been described as ‘fruits’ one can attain by following this path. According to the Sutta, the first step of the development of Samādhi is characterized by the disappearance of what are called the ‘five hindrances’. They are desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, worry and flurry and doubt.

\textsuperscript{137} D.iii.33
\textsuperscript{138} D.i.67.
The positive psychological change that takes place by getting rid of the five factors is described in the following manner:

‘As long as a monk does not perceive the disappearance of the five hindrances in him, he feels as if in debt, in sickness, in bonds, in slavery, on a desert journey. But when he perceives the disappearance of the five hindrances in himself, it is as if he were freed from debt, from sickness, bonds, from slavery, from the perils of the desert.’

The relief and psychological freedom one experiences at this stage create the concentration of mind that is the door of the next stage. The next stage of the development is ‘absorptions’ (Jhāna) which come to be as a result of the purity and concentration of mind. There are four of such jhana presented in a gradually ascending order. The Sutta describes each of them in the following words:

“Being detached from sense-desires, a monk detached from unwholesome states, thus, he enters and remains in the first jhāna. Again, a monk with the subsiding of thinking and pondering, by gaining inner tranquility and oneness of mind, enters and remains in the second jhāna, which is without thinking and pondering, born of concentration, filled with delight and joy, and with this delight and joy born of concentration he also suffuses his body that no spot remains untouched.”

“Again, a monk with the fading away of delight remains imperturbable, mindful and clearly aware, experiences in himself that joy of which Noble Ones say: “happy is he who dwells with equanimity and mindfulness”, and he enters and remains in the third jhāna. And with this joy devoid of delight he so suffuses his body that no spot remains untouched”. “Again, a monk, having given up pleasure and pain, and with the
disappearance of former gladness and sadness, enters and remains in the fourth *jhāna* that is beyond pleasure and pain, and purified by equanimity and mindfulness.”

In addition to these four, there are four other superior *jhānas* that indicates the pacification of ‘thinking and pondering’ at a much higher degree. This particular discourse does not mention them. But they are found in some other discourses. They have been always described in the following stereotyped manner: - ‘Through the total overcoming of the perception of matter, and through the vanishing of the sense-reactions and the non-attention to the perceptions of the variety (*nānatta*), with the idea, ‘Boundless is space’, he reaches the Sphere of Boundless Space (*ākāsānañcāya*ṣaṇa) and abides therein.

Through the total overcoming of the Sphere of Boundless Space, and with the idea ‘Boundless is consciousness’, he reaches the Sphere of Boundless consciousness (*viññānañcāya*ṣaṇa) and abides therein. Through the total overcoming of the Sphere of Boundless Consciousness, and with the idea, ‘Nothing is there’, he reaches the Sphere of Nothingness (*ākiñcañcāya*ṣaṇa) and abides therein.

Through the total overcoming of the Sphere of Nothingness, he reaches the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception (*neva-saññā-nāsaññayatana*). These eight *jhānas* are collectively called the ‘eight absorptions’ (*attha samapatti*). It is believed that the eight *jhānas* were already known and practiced before the time of the Buddha. According to the *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, the Buddha himself practiced thee states before his Buddhahood. However, he concluded that none of them would lead to

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the real freedom he looked for. He accepted the jhānas as preliminary in the path of liberation.\textsuperscript{140}

By fulfilling concentration one could gain Abhiññā, higher spiritual power that consists of six. The six higher powers’, or supernormal know- ledges, consisting of five mundane (lokiya) powers attainable through the utmost perfection in mental concentration (Samādhi) and one supermundane (lokuttara) power attainable through penetrating insight (vipassanā), i.e. by the extinction of all cankers (āsavakkhaya), in other words, - realization of Arahatship.

They are:

(1) Psychic powers (iddhividha), (2) divine ear (dībasota),

(3) Penetration of others’ mind (cetopariya), (4) remembrance of former existences (pubbenivāsanussati), (5) divine eye (dibbacakkhu), (6) and extinction of all cankers (āsavakkhaya).

(1) “Now, O bhikkhus, the monk enjoys the various magical powers (iddhividha), such as being one he becomes manifold, and having become manifold he again becomes one. He appears and disappears. Without being obstructed he passes through walls and mountains, just as if through the air. In the earth he dives and rises up again, just as if in the water. He walks on water without sinking, just as if on the earth. Cross-legged he floats through the air, just like a winged bird. With his hand he touches the sun and moon, these so mighty ones, so powerful ones. Even up to the Brahma-world he has mastery over his body.”

\textsuperscript{140} M.i.26.
(2) “With the divine ear (dibbasota) he hears sounds heavenly and human, far and near.”

(3) “He knows the minds of other beings (parassa cetopariya), of other persons, by penetrating them with his own mind. He knows the greedy mind as greedy and the not-greedy one as not greedy; knows the hating mind as hating and the not-hating one as not hating; knows the deluded mind as deluded and the not-deluded one as not deluded; knows the shrunken mind and the distracted one, the developed mind and the underdeveloped one, the surpassable mind and the unsurpassable one, the concentrated mind and the unconcentrated one, the freed mind and the unfreed one.”

(4) “He remembers manifold former existences (pubbe nivasa-nussati), such as one birth, two, three, four and five births…. Hundred thousand births; remembers many formations and dissolutions of worlds; ‘there I was, such name I had… and vanishing from there I entered into existence somewhere else … and vanishing from there I again reappeared here.’ Thus he remembers, always together with the marks and peculiarities in all his former existences.”

(5) “With the divine eye (dibba cakkhu = yathā kammupagañāna or cutupapātañāna), the pure one, he sees beings vanishing and reappearing, low and noble ones, beautiful and ugly ones, sees how beings are reappearing according to their deeds: ‘These beings, indeed, followed evil ways in bodily actions, words, and thoughts, insulted the noble ones, held evil views, and according to their evil views they have acted. At the dissolution of their body i.e., after death, they have appeared in lower worlds, in painful states of existence, in the world of suffering,
or in hell. However, for those other beings endowed with good action have appeared in a happy state of existence, in a heavenly world.”

(6) “Through the extinction of all cankers (āsavakkhaya), even in this very life, he enters into the possession of deliverance of mind, the deliverance through wisdom, after having himself understood and realized it.”

Paññā comprises a very wide field. The specific Buddhist knowledge or wisdom as part of the Noble Eightfold Path (magga) is insight (vippasanā), intuitive knowledge that brings about the four stages of holiness and the realization of Nibbāna. Two concepts found in the Mahaparinibbana Sutta in relation to the Supreme Bliss of Emancipation are cetovimutti, deliverance of mind and paññāvimutti, deliverance through wisdom. The Pali-English Dictionary translates the word pannavimutti as ‘emancipation through insight, renders paññāvimutti as ‘person freed by reason’.

Mrs. I.B.Horner also recognizes that paññāvimutta is not ‘emancipation from, but, emancipation through’ and renders it as the ‘person freed by means of intuitive wisdom’. The Myanmar Pitaka Translation Association renders them as ‘taint free emancipation of the mind’ (Arahattaphala Samāadhi) and the insight emancipation (Arahattaphala paññā). In the highest sense, Cetomovimutti signifies the fruition of Arahantship and paññāvimmutti signifies the wisdom associated with the fruits of holiness.

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141 D.i.34: M.iv.6, A.iii.99, Pug.271, 239.
142 D.ii.78.
143 PED.390.
Paññāvimutti is definitely instrumental in bringing about the fruition of holiness. It comes from ‘paññāya’ and it is to be rendered as ‘by means of’ or ‘through’. The Kitagiri Sutta defining the term - ‘paññāvimutto’, says that - he is a person who has destroyed all taints by means of insight and consequently, the total effect is the freedom from both bondages, emotional and intellectual.\textsuperscript{146} The word cetovimutti appears in the first sermon of the Buddha where He says that His cetomimutti is unshaken and that it is His last birth and there are no more births for Him. The total emancipation is meant by the use of the word cetovimutti.\textsuperscript{147} In the fourth chapter the Sutta speaks of four steps, including an additional one called vimutti. It highlights the climax of the process of Buddhist training with vimutti, the fourth step is nothing but the elaboration of the third step, Paññā. By fulfilling wisdom one can gain Pañisaṁbhidā, ‘analytical knowledge’ is of four kinds: analytical knowledge of the true meaning (attha), of causal relation (dhamma) of language (niruttī), of sharp intellect (patibhāna):

1. The analytical knowledge of the meaning (attha) is the knowledge with regard to the sense. (2) The analytical knowledge of the law (dhamma) is the knowledge with regard to the law. (3) The analytical knowledge of language (niruttī) is the knowledge of the language is with regard to those former two things. (4) The analytical knowledge of ready-wit (patibhāna) is the knowledge about the former three kinds of knowledge.”\textsuperscript{148}

1. The classification of these steps is posterior to the first discourse of the Buddha where the Noble Eightfold Path has not been classified in conformity

\textsuperscript{146} M.ii.70  
\textsuperscript{147} V.iii.16.  
\textsuperscript{148} Vibh.XV
with these gradual steps.\textsuperscript{149} According to the interpretation of the Noble Eightfold Path that is classified under the three divisions of training, the first two belong to wisdom (Paññā), the next three - to morality (Sīla) and last three come under the concentration (Samādhi).

The division of three steps in its gradual order was very popular even during the time of the Buddha and these steps have become part and parcel of the Buddha’s teaching, just as much as the Noble Eightfold Path. The physical and mental training in Buddhism is aimed at producing a man of vision, where morality plays a basic role in governing his behavioral pattern as the initial step of the graduated course of training.

In this connection the Paharada Sutta of Anguttara Nikāya could be cited as – ‘that eight wonderful qualities of the ocean are compared to eight equally wonderful qualities of the dispensation’. Just as the mighty ocean slopes away gradually, shaves away gradually, with no abruptness like a precipice, even so in the discipline of the Dhamma, there is a gradual discipline, a gradual action, a gradual practice with no abruptness such as a penetration of genesis.\textsuperscript{150} The Eightfold Path and the graduated course have to be considered mutually inclusive. When these successive stages have been cultivated, the mind is set free from the intoxication of sensuality, kāmāsava, from the intoxication of becoming, bhavāsava, and from the intoxication of ignorance, avijjāsava.\textsuperscript{151}

\textsuperscript{149} S.v.420, D.i.125.
\textsuperscript{150} A.iv.197.
\textsuperscript{151} D.ii.105.
The place occupied by morality in early Buddhism remained intact throughout the ages and became an integral part of every form of Buddhism practiced all over the world irrespective of the distinction of *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna*. The *Theravāda* further magnified the importance and gave much more dignity and superiority to discipline (*vinaya*) over morality (*sīla*) and pronounced that the discipline was the very lifeblood of the dispensation, *vinayonāma sāsanassa āyu*.\(^\text{152}\)

**THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTH**

The constituents of this set stated in the *Sutta* are as follows:

- Satipathana
- *Sammappadhana*
- *Iddhidada*
- *Indriya*
- *Bala*
- *Bojjhanga*
- *Ariya atthangika magga*.

The Pāli word for truth is ‘*Saccā*’. The first discourse, ‘Turning of the Wheel of the Dhamma,’ delivered at Isipatana (Modern Sarnath, Varanasi) after His Enlightenment; the Buddha gave a brief account of the truth called the Four Noble Truths (*cattāri ariyasaccāni*). They are the briefest synthesis of the entire teachings of Buddhism, since all those manifold doctrines of the threefold canon are included therein without any exception. They are called ‘Noble’ because they are unique in a religious sense and also because they unfold the religious objective of the teaching of the Buddha

\(^{152}\) Vin A.18.
by analyzing the present suffering and unsatisfactory human experience and prescribed a religious mode of behavior to get out of suffering and dissatisfaction forever. They are called ‘Truths’ because they are factual statements. The correspondence to the facts, coherence and consistency or compatibility with the real state of affairs, and verifiability are the characteristics of truths.

It is interesting to note that the first sermon beginning with the futility of the two extreme practices prevailing among the truth seekers of those days. Addressing the five ascetics with whom He had association when He practiced austere asceticism as a Bodhisatta, the Buddha says that there are two extremes to be avoided by a recluse who is seeking the truth and reality. The two extremes are self-indulgence (kāmasukhālikā-nuyoga) and self-mortification (attakilamathānuyoga).

Self-mortification defines that attaches to sensual pleasure is low (hēno), common (gāmo), belonging to the ordinary man (pothujjaniko), ignoble (anariyo) and connected with misery (anathasamhito). Self-mortification is suffering (dukkho), ignoble (anariya) and connected with misery (anathasamhito). Therefore, these two extreme ways must be avoided.153

The Buddha points out the Middle Path (Majjhima patipadā) lying between these two produces insight and knowledge leading to serenity, higher knowledge, full enlightenment and supreme bliss, Nibbana. Then the discourse was summarized the eight factors of the Middle Path and moves on to reveal the Four Noble Truths: - Suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Cessation of Suffering, the Path leading to the Cessation of

153 V.iii.14.
Suffering.\textsuperscript{154} It is these four Truths that the Buddha awakened to on the night of his enlightenment\textsuperscript{155} and made known to the world when he set rolling the matchless Wheel of the \textit{Dhamma}.\textsuperscript{156}

The discourse reveals that the Four Noble Truths are three-circled and twelve-fold (\textit{catusu ariyasaccesu tiparivattam dvādasākaram}). With regard to each truth, there is the knowledge of the truth (\textit{sacca-ñāna}), the knowledge that it is to be comprehended (\textit{kicca-ñāna}), and the knowledge of comprehension (\textit{kata-ñāna}) which arose in the Buddha, thus making the knowledge twelve-fold by three circles of each truth.\textsuperscript{157} While sojourning at \textit{Kotigāma} on the way to Vesali, the Buddha addressed the bhikkhus, saying: “Bhikkhus, it is through no realizing, through not penetrating the Four Noble Truths that this long course of birth and death has been passed through and undergone by me as well as by you. What are these four that are not known properly, penetratingly? They are:

1. Suffering, \textit{Dukkha},
2. The origin of suffering, \textit{Samudaya},
3. The cessation of suffering, \textit{Nirodha} and
4. The way leading to the cessation of suffering, \textit{Magga}.”\textsuperscript{158}

Existence after existence has had to be gone through in this long stretch of \textit{samsāra} because of the lack of understanding of the Four Noble Truths as they really are. Perceiving the Noble Truths makes one free from all round of \textit{samsāra}. The term ‘\textit{dukkha}’ has been used in Buddhist teaching to convey the totality of experiences of a

\textsuperscript{154} V.iii. 14. \\
\textsuperscript{155} M.i.19. \\
\textsuperscript{156} M.iii.290. \\
\textsuperscript{157} V.iii.16. \\
\textsuperscript{158} D.ii.77.
normal human being in the world. It has been rendered into English in numerous ways. Many different scholars have used many more different English words to cover the meaning of *dukkha*. Among them, the words ‘ill’, ‘pain’, ‘sorrow’, ‘insecurity’, ‘unpleasantness’, ‘anguish’, ‘anxiety’, ‘unhappiness’, ‘conflict’, ‘suffering’, and ‘unsatisfactoriness’ are found. Today, the commonest rendering for *dukkha* is ‘suffering’.

Suffering has a wider connotation. With the usage of doctrinal import, it has been used to denote a narrow physical meaning as well as a psychological meaning side by side. All these three applications of the term are quite clearly seen in the analysis of suffering found in the *Dhammacakkapa-vattana Sutta*.

**THE FIRST NOBLE TRUTH**

It is explained thus: “This is the Noble Truth of Suffering: birth is suffering (*jatipi dukkha*), old age is suffering (*Jarapi dukkha*), disease is suffering (*maranampi dukkha*) and dying is suffering (*byadipi dukkha*), association with what is not dear is suffering (*piyehivippayoga dukkha*), separation from what is dear is suffering (*apiyehisampayoga dukkha*), not getting what one wants is suffering (*yampicchan nalabhati tampi dukkha*)—in short the five aggregates of grasping are suffering(*samkhittena paccupadana-kkhandha dukkha*).”

This is a very precise statement full of meaning covering all spheres of human life, which delineate the influence of suffering in many aspects. The detail account of each suffering is described with additional items in the Saccavibhanga Sutta.

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159 *V.iii.14.*
160 *M.iii.*
Birth, ageing, disease and death have been mentioned to illustrate the physiological aspect of the issue. The psychological aspect has been brought to light by the facts of association of what is not dear, separation from what is dear and not getting what one wants. The doctrinal aspect is stated by the fact of the five aggregates of grasping. The physiological and psychological aspects of suffering are quite clear. The doctrinal aspect of suffering stated in brief in the discourse referring to the five aggregates of grasping:

1. Grasping of materiality (rupāda) includes the physical body with its sense faculties as well as external material objects.

2. Grasping of feeling (venadupāda) is the affective element in experience, either pleasure, painful or neutral.

3. Grasping of perception (saññupāda) is the factor responsible for nothing the qualities of things and also accounts for recognition and memory.

4. Grasping of mental formation (sankharupāda) is an umbrella – like term that includes all volitional, emotive, and intellective aspects of mental life.

5. Grasping of consciousness (viññānupāda) is the basis awareness of an object indispensable to all conditions.

As Venerable Sariputta shows his masterly analysis of the first noble truth, representative of all five aggregates are present on every occasion of experience, arising...
in connection with each of the six sense faculties and their objects.\textsuperscript{161} The classification of the five aggregates covers the entire phenomenal existence. How they cause proliferation (\textit{papañca}) ultimately leading to suffering is described graphically in the Buddhist theory of perception found in the Buddhism as well as in the \textit{Abhidhamma} philosophy in a much more elaborate form. It is to be noted that leading to suffering is not the five aggregates, but the mental process of grasping (\textit{upādāna}). Therefore, suffering that one has to experience in one’s wanderings in the cycle of life has to be understood in this doctrinal basis. Each of the aggregate of individuality is a constant flux and there is no one’s ‘own-ness’ in any of them. So the Buddha said that ‘whatever is impermanent, is suffering’ (\textit{yam aniccam tam dukkham})\textsuperscript{162} is to be considered as a universal truth.

The Buddha was realistic and objective when He says, with regard to life and the enjoyment of sense-pleasure, that one should clearly understand three things:

\begin{enumerate}
  \item Attraction or enjoyment (\textit{assāda}),
  \item Evil consequence or danger or unsatisfactoriness (\textit{ādinava}) and
  \item Freedom or liberation (\textit{nissarana}).\textsuperscript{163}
\end{enumerate}

When you see a pleasant, charming and beautiful person, you like him (or her), you are attracted, you enjoy seeing that person again and again, and you derive pleasure and satisfaction from that person. This is enjoyment (\textit{assāda}), the fact of experience. But this enjoyment is not permanent, just as that person and all his (or her) attractions are not permanent either. When the situation changes, you cannot see that person, when you are

\textsuperscript{161} M.i.241.
\textsuperscript{162} Pts.295.
\textsuperscript{163} M.i.118.
deprived of this enjoyment, you become sad, you may become unreasonable and unbalanced, you may even behave foolishly. This is the evil, unsatisfactory and dangerous side of the picture (ādinava). This, too, is the fact of existence. Now, if you have no attachment to that person, if you are completely detached, that means you are free and liberated (nissarana). These three things are true with regard to all enjoyment in life.

The notion of impermanent forms the bedrock for the Buddha’s teaching. The characteristic of the impermanence that makes everything conditioned, leads directly to the recognition of ‘the universality of the suffering. Therefore, in his explanation of the First Noble Truth, the Buddha says, “In short, the five aggregates affected by clinging are suffering.” The Buddha’s deliverance that the five aggregates are dukkha reveals that the very things we identify with, and hold two - as the basis for happiness, rightly seen, is the basis for suffering that we dread. Even when we feel ourselves comfortable and secure, the instability of the aggregates is itself a source of oppression and keeps us perpetually exposed to suffering in its most blatant forms.

Impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self are basic facts of existence. These three are called ‘tilakkhaa’ in Pali, three characteristics of existence. When we confirm ourselves to the first of the three, impermanence that is expressed the canon in numerous contexts. For instance - in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta:

“Impermanent is all component things,
They arise and cease, that is their nature,
They come into being and pass away,
Release from them is bliss supreme”.\textsuperscript{164}

The discernment of the transient nature of all compounded things, as they really are, is taught as the path to purity in the \textit{Dhammapada} as follows:

“\textquote{All conditioned things are impermanent,}

When one sees this with wisdom,

One turns away from suffering,

This is the path to purification”\textsuperscript{.165}

It is to be noticed that the Pali word used for component things is ‘\textit{sankhāra}’, which has different meanings. It is used in the present context to mean what is compounded, conditioned and causally arisen. According to Buddhist analysis every phenomenon of our experience is causally conditioned.

Therefore, in Buddhism the sum total of the teaching of impermanence is that all component things that have conditioned existence are processed and not a group of abiding entities, but the change occurs in such a rapid succession. One does not perceive their arising and breaking up. It shows that people are accustomed to thinking as ‘their own mind and body and the external world as wholes’. So long as one fails to see things as processes in motion, one will not understand the transient nature of all phenomena. When one sees things as they really are, nowhere can one find happiness but only unsatisfactoriness.\textsuperscript{166}

\textsuperscript{164}D.ii.129.  
\textsuperscript{165}Dhp.277.  
\textsuperscript{166}Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro, The Essence of Buddhism, p.16, Hozokan, 1948.
One has to encounter suffering throughout one’s life is self-evident for the most part, and needs no elaboration. In other words, one is overwhelmed by unsatisfactory and conflicting situations that one experience in one’s day to day life and needs no comment. Because the internal and external conflicts that one has to face throughout one’s life are signified by the concept of suffering in Buddhism. All states of existence within Samsāra, being necessarily transitory and subject to change, are incapable of providing lasting security. Life in any world is unstable, it is swept away, has no shelter and protector, nothing of its own.167

The Buddha’s teaching to the suffering world is to be compared to the administration of medicine to the sick by a physician. The expounding of the Four Noble Truths in the first sermon can be understood on the analogy of a pathological analysis of affliction and cure. The First Noble Truth is suffering like an illness. The present predicament of man is analyzed in the First Noble Truth with its physical, psychological and doctrinal aspects and shows how those afflictions are woven into the fabric of our existence. The Second Truth, the root cause of the present affliction, which exists in the form of desire, is broken down into its constituents for the better understanding of the cause. In the Third Noble Truth, the state of being redeemed from afflictions by regaining health is described, which is nothing but Nibbana and in the Fourth, the remedy to ameliorate the affliction is prescribed by way of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Buddhism is therapeutic in character and it analyzes causes and conditions of the present predicament of human existence and suggests remedial measures to be followed for the alleviation of it. The scientific methodology followed by the Buddha. The disease,

167 M.ii.244.
the cause of the disease by the multiplication of bacteria and viruses in the bloodstream and then the cure and destruction of the invading bacteria and viruses by injecting antibiotics and other medicinal substances to the bloodstream of the patient is explained. The therapeutic approach is so fundamental to early Buddhism and it as a system of psychotherapy.\textsuperscript{168} The \textit{Visuddhimagga} also elucidated the implications of the four Noble Truths as follow: “The truth of suffering is like a disease, the origin is like the cause of the disease, the cessation is like the curing of the diseases and the path is like the medicine.”\textsuperscript{169}

**THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH**

It deals with the cause of suffering. Just like the cause of an illness, the cause of suffering is none other than craving, \textit{tanhā samudayo bhave}.\textsuperscript{170} Craving in Buddhism includes all varieties of desire, ranging from passionate lust or cupidity to subtle affection and attachment of any kind. Therefore the Pali word ‘\textit{tanhā}’ has been translated into English not only as ‘craving’ but also as ‘desire’, ‘lust’, ‘greed’, ‘attachment’, ‘love’, ‘affection’, ‘passion’, ‘thirst’, ‘yearning’. While describing this truth in the first discourse, craving is explained with three epithets together with its three aspects, which cover the entire range of human suffering in the cycle of births and deaths. Craving causes rebirth (\textit{ponobhavika}) and is accompanied by delight and lust (\textit{nandirāgasahagata}), and finding

\textsuperscript{169} Vis.XVI, p. 87.
\textsuperscript{170} Abhidhammathasanghaha, p.52.
pleasure in this or that (tatra tatrabhinandini), namely, craving for sense pleasures (kāma tanhā) craving for being (bhava tanhā) and craving for non-being (vihava tanhā).\footnote{171 V.iii.p.13}

The term Tanhā is a very significant word in both Buddhist philosophy and psychology. It is charged with religious emotion and delineates the causal genesis of suffering and the psychological aspect of entire human behavior. The word ‘lobha’, or ‘raga’, the first three roots of evil, denotes craving. The different aspects of craving have been brought to light in the discourses. A wide variety of term such as :kāma (sensual pleasure), chanda (desire), kamacchanda (desire for sensual pleasure), rāga (lust), rati (attachment), pema (love), sineha (affection), lobha (greed), nandi (delight), pipāsa (thirst), parilaha (consuming passion), muccha (swoon), issa (envy), macchariya (avarice) are used. The causal link between suffering and craving discovered by the Buddha that when the cause of craving ceases to be, the resultant suffering ceases to be simultaneous.

It is this craving or Tanhā itself in various ways that gives rise to all forms of suffering and the continuity of beings. But it should not be taken as the first cause, for there is no first cause or possibility as everything is relative and interdependent according to Buddhism. Even this ‘craving’, tanha which is considered as the cause of dukkha, depends for its arising (samudaya) on something else, which is a sensation (vedanā), \footnote{172 M.i.63.} and sensation arises depending on contact (phassa), and so on and so forth goes on in the circle which is known as Paticca samuppada, conditioned genesis.
We must clearly and carefully mark and remember that the cause of arising of dukkha is within itself, and not from a cause outside; and we must equally well remember that the cause of the cessation of dukkha is also within dukkha itself, and not from outside. This is what is meant by the well-known formula often found in original text:

*yam kinci samudayadhammam sabbam tam nirodhadhammam*, whatever is of the nature of arising, all this - is the nature of cessation.\(^{173}\) A being, a thing, or a system, if it has within itself the nature of arising, the nature of becoming into being, has also within itself the nature of its own cessation and destruction. Thus, dukkha (five aggregates) has within itself the nature of its own arising, and has also within itself the nature of its own cessation.

What we call life is the combination of the five aggregates, a combination of physical and mental energies. These are constantly changing; they do not remain the same for two consecutive moments. Every moment they are born and they die. When the aggregates arise, they decay and die every moment from the time you are born, just decay and die. In *Sakkapanha Sutta*, all conflicts and confrontations in the world are traced to craving associated with the prolific tendency of the human mind. By nature craving springs up and thrives wherever it finds something delightful and pleasurable.\(^{174}\) An illustration of the nature of craving with apt similes is mentioned as follows: “Beset by craving, people run about like an entrapped here. Held fast by mental fetters, they come to suffering again and again for a long time.”\(^{175}\)

\(^{173}\) M.iii,p.3.
\(^{175}\) Dhp.342.
up again if its roots remain uncut and firm, even so, until the craving that lies dormant is rooted out, this suffering springs up again and again.”

Inter-relatedness of craving and suffering is stated with emphasis; “From craving springs grief, from craving springs fear. For one who is wholly free from craving, there is no grief, much less fear.”

“When his cravings overcome him, his sorrows increase more and more, like the entangling creeper called ‘birana.’”

Life in the world is incomplete, insatiate, the slave of craving (³no loko atitto tanhādāso). A man, overwhelmed by insatiate desire, is always in pursuit of more and more sensual pleasures.

Craving is the origin of personality. It is because of the threefold craving that personality is originated. The question of the origin of personality was put by a layman, Visākha to Bhikkhuni Dhammadinna, this was what she replied:“Friend Visākha, it is craving, which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and seeking pleasure in this and that: that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for being, and craving for non-being. This is called the origin of personality by the Buddha.”

Dukkha arises because of craving and it ceases because of wisdom. Craving and wisdom are both within the Five Aggregates.

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176 Dhp.338.
177 Ibid.216.
178 Ibid.335.
179 M.ii.244.
180 M.i.373.
THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

It is the cessation of suffering. The Buddha’s objective is the practical one of leading beings to release from suffering. In the first discourse, it is described as the cessation of craving without residue and with dispassion (asesavirāganirodha), giving up (cāgo), complete abandonment (patiṇissaggo), release (mutti), and non-attachment (anālayo). Destroying craving is the objective of Buddhist training which culminates in realization of Nibbāna. It is also known by the term tanhakkhaya, the extinction of craving.

Nibbāna can never be given explained in words in human language is too poor to speak out the true nature of the Absolute Truth. Words are symbols representing things and ideas known to us; and these symbols do not or cannot convey the true nature of even ordinary things. To see things as they really are (yathābhātam) without ignorance is the extinction of craving, i.e., the realization of this Truth, Nibbāna. It is described precisely as ‘profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, and subtle, to be experienced by the wise.’

Those who live in lust and hate cannot be perceived Nibbāna; and also it cannot be grasped in the terms of logic and reasoning. But it can be seen with the rising of spiritual vision, and by fixing the mind upon it in the depths of meditation. It is explicitly stated that is it beyond the range of logic (atakkavacara). The truths are based on the experience the Buddha gained when He attained Enlightenment. He has shown that some of the truths cannot be communicated by language applying logical reasoning. In Brahamajāla Sutta, two contemporary theories named it as products of rational

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181 M.ii.11.
182 M.ii.95.
thinking and metaphysical speculation (takkapariyabatam vimamsanucaritam)\(^\text{183}\) has been rejected as unsatisfactory.

**THE FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH**

It is the cessation of suffering, *Dukkha*. When wisdom is developed and cultivated according to the Fourth Noble Truth, it sees the secret or life, the reality things as they really are. When the secret is discovered, when the truth is seen, all the forces which feverishly produce the continuity of samsara in illusion become calm and incapable of producing any more kamma-formations, because there is no more illusion, no more craving for continuity. It is like a mental disease that is cured when the cause or the secret of the malady is discovered and seen by the patient.\(^\text{184}\)

He who has realized *Nibbāna* is the happiest being in the world. He is free from all complexes and obsession, the worries and troubles that torment others. His mental health is perfect. He does not repent the past, nor does he brood over the future. He lives fully in the present.\(^\text{185}\) As he is free from selfish desire, hatred, ignorance, conceit, pride, and all such ‘defilements’, he is pure and gentle, full of universal love, compassion, kindness, sympathy, understanding and tolerance. His service to others is of the purest kind, for he has no thought of self.

The uniqueness of the Buddhist approach lies in the fact of realizing of happiness by the elimination of sufferings, *dukkha* by the realization of the transcendental truth with one’s own personal effort by having practiced the path enunciated by the Buddha. To

\(^{183}\) D.i.10.
\(^{184}\) W. Rahula, What the Buddha Taught, P43, Buddhist Cultural Center, Colombo, 1996.
\(^{185}\) S.i.5.
eliminate suffering one has to follow the Fourth Noble Truth, the way leading to the cessation of dukkha. This is called the Middle Path that lies between the two extreme ends of the path. The practice of the two extreme ends prevailed and it was practiced by the Buddha prior to His Enlightenment. One extreme is the search for happiness through the pleasures of the senses, which is low, common, unprofitable and the way of the ordinary people and the other is the search for happiness through self-mortification in different forms of asceticism, which is painful, unworthy and unprofitable. With experience the Buddha challenged the efficacy of these two extreme views for realization and laid bare their intrinsic incompatibility as well as inconsistency. The futility of the two paths of practice for the realization of truth led the Buddha-aspirant to reason out a new path for the purpose of achieving the desired end. He discovered through personal experience the Middle Path, which gives vision and knowledge, which leads to calm, insight and enlightenment and this ‘Middle Path’ is generally referred to as the Noble Eightfold Path, the only antidote to suffering.

The path enunciated by the Buddha is the prescription for the ills of existence. It is by this Fourth Truth that craving, ever present in the present life binds one to the cyclic existence; it has to be destroyed. It is a set of practices, which has been practiced by the Buddhas and the disciples of the past and rediscovered by the Buddha Gotama after a very long interval.\textsuperscript{186} Although metaphorically it is called ‘Path’, it is to be traversed by prospective disciples who wish to up an end to suffering. It ensures ethical and moral behavior of the practitioner and leads him to liberation from suffering. It enhances the culture and development of one’s three avenues of action: physical, verbal and mental

\textsuperscript{186} K.S.ii. 74.
actions for the betterment of oneself and other beings, ultimately leading one to perfection.

Practically the whole teaching of the Buddha deals in some way or another with this ‘Path’. The Buddha explained it in different ways and in different words to different people, according to the stage of their development and at the level of their capacity to understand them. The Middle Path consists of eight factors, *ariyo atthangiko maggo*. Although given as a path, it is not to be taken as a gradual path having a series of steps. The factors of the path are interrelated and to be practiced simultaneously. Those factors are mutually inclusive and mutually supportive. The path is described in connection with morality, concentration and wisdom and the question of the Noble Eightfold Path’s position in relation to these three forwarded by *Visakha* to *Bhikkuni Dhammadina* and the *Bhikkhuni* replied that the three aggregates are not included in the Noble Eightfold Path but the Noble Eightfold Path is included by the three aggregates.\(^{187}\) The Noble Eightfold Paths are:

1. *Sammā ditthi*, Right Understanding,
2. *Sammā samkappa*, Right Thought,
3. *Sammā vācā*, Right Speech,
4. *Sammā kammanta*, Right Action,
5. *Sammā ājiva*, Right Livelihood,
6. *Sammā vāyāma*, Right Effort,
7. *Sammā sati*, Right Mindfulness,

\(^{187}\) M.i, pp.301-302.
They are explained in detail in two full suttas, *Saccavibhinga*\(^{188}\) and *Mahacattārisaka*\(^{189}\) of *Majjhima Nikāya*. *Saccavibhinga Sutta* gives a factorial analysis of the eight components of the path using the definitions that are standard in the Pali Texts. *Mahācattārisaka Sutta* expounds the path from a different angle under the rubric of noble right concentration with its supports and its requisites. The Buddha makes the important distinction between the mundane and supramundane stages of the path, defines the first five factors for both stages, and shows how the path factors function in unison in the common task of providing an outlet from suffering.

It should not be thought that the eight categories of the Path should be followed and practiced one after the other in the numerical order as given in the usual list above. But they are to be developed more or less simultaneously, as far as possible in accordance with the capacity of each individual. They are all linked together and each helps the cultivation of the others. These eight factors aim at promoting and perfecting the three essentials of Buddhist training and discipline: namely, ethical conduct (*Sīla*), mental discipline (*Samādhi*) and wisdom (*Paññā*). Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood constitute ethical conduct (*Sīla*). It should be realized that Buddhist ethical and moral conduct aims at promoting a happy and harmonious life, both for the individual and for society. This moral conduct is considered as the indispensable foundation of all higher spiritual attainments. Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration are included in mental discipline (*Samādhi*). Right Understanding and Right Thought are in wisdom (*Paññā*).

\(^{188}\) M.iii.290.  
\(^{189}\) Ibid.71.
The three factors of the path; Right Thought, Right Speech, and Right Action that comes under the morality have a direct influence on the society. As one can see, social ethics in Buddhism are practicable only in relation to society. Ethical and moral behavior prescribed in these factors becomes meaningful only in the context of society. Right Thought is a factor to be developed and put into practice in relation to society for the good and happiness of oneself and society. When he develops and practices the right kind of thoughts of evil thoughts harmful to others, it is needless to say that the society is benefited by his moral conduct. And also to a considerable extent, social concern is implicit even in the other two paths; concentration and wisdom.

With reference to the Four Noble Truths we have four functions to perform. The First Noble Truth is Dukkha, the nature of life, its suffering, its sorrows and joys, its imperfection and unsatisfactoriness, its impermanence and insubstantiality. With regard to this, our function is to understand it as a fact, clearly and completely (pariññeyya). The Second Noble Truth is the origin of Dukkha, which is desire, craving accompanied by all other passions, defilements and impurities. A mere understanding of this fact is not sufficient. Here our function is to discard it, to eliminate, to destroy and eradicate it (pahātabba). The Third Noble Truth is the cessation of Dukkha, Nibbana, the absolute Truth the Ultimate Reality. Here our function is to realize it (sacchikātabba). The Fourth Noble Truth is the Path leading to the realization of Nibbāna. A mere knowledge of the Path, however complete, will not do. In this case, our function is to follow it and keep to it (bhāvetabba).

In brief, the truth of suffering which ultimately consists of the five aggregates must be fully understood (parinneyya). The truth of its origin, craving, must be
abandoned (*pahatābba*). The truth of cessation, Nibbana, must be realized (*sacchikatābba*). And the truth of the way, the Noble Eightfold Path, must be developed (*bhavetābba*). Developing the path brings to completion all four tasks, at which point one reaches the destruction of the taints. This process brings with penetration of the same Four Noble Truths, thus, it says that the destruction of the taints is for those who know and see the Four Noble Truths.\(^{190}\)

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\(^{190}\) S.iii.381; MNd.16; Vi.iii.16.