CHAPTER III
EVOLUTION OF HUMAN LIFE IN THE WOMB

The living being, which is subject to the desire for re-existence (Bhava), takes rebirth (Jāti). It is not an entity nor an individual but just a conglomeration of Nāma-Rūpa that takes rebirth in a changed form. The change is effected by its past deeds (Kamma) as also by time and circumstances in which it reappears. Jāti is controlled by Kāmabhava and not Uppattibhava. Kamma is the immediately effective cause of Jāti (Upanissaya). The birth could be in any one of the four modes of generation:

Having discussed the concept of life, it is also necessary to know that how many kinds of living being are there. Buddhism classifies all living beings in to four categories as below:

1. Jalābuja - womb-born creatures such as human beings, dogs, cows etc.
2. Aṇdaja - egg-born creatures such as, birds, duck, pea-cock, hen etc.
3. Samsedaja - moisture-born creatures such as, worms.
4. Opapātika-self-created or self-caused creatures such as, god, ghost and demon.\(^{174}\)

Discussion in the birth-process of human being:
The first classification, womb-born beings comprises some kinds of creatures that take conception in a mother’s womb, including human being and some kinds of Devas inhabiting the earth. Egg-born being membranes of all kinds of birds and oviparous snakes, where as the

\(^{174}\) D.N. III. p. 222.
second classification, all embryos taking moisture as material for their growth such as some kinds of lowly animal life are of the third classification i.e. moisture-born beings. The fourth kind of birth, Opapātika, is for beings having a spontaneous birth that cannot be seen by physical eyes. Petas and some kinds of Devas including Brahma belong to this category, for they appear spontaneously without passing through an embryonic stage, their births are conditioned by the results of human. It is essential to know all kinds of modes through which all being come in to existence.

In the Buddhist Philosophy ‘life’ etymologically means the state of being or the moments of continued existence.\(^\text{175}\) It is the collection of all phenomena that are parts of life i.e. which is ordinarily called life. In other works, life is the collected unit of all life factors.

There are two descriptions of life-factors in Buddhist philosophy:

1. Life, as described in Suttantapiṭaka, consists of five Khandhas: Rūpa (corporeality), Vedanā (feeling; sensation), Saññā (perception), Sankhāra (mental formations) and Viññāna (consciousness)

2. Life, as described in Abhidhammapiṭaka embodies the three factors of absolute truth (Paramatthadhamma), i.e., Citta and Cetasika, and the relation between Kāya and Citta (Body and mind) which are the essential factors of Human’s life.

3.1 Evolution of Human life in the Womb

The theory of Evolution of Human life the Womb in Buddhism has been interpreted and understood in the different parts of the world in different ways. The doctrinal teaching of the Buddha can be proved all time as doctrine of science. Buddha said that if the creatures keep

cravings or greed in their mind, they have to become victim of rebirth and death again and aging in many existences. If they do not have cravings or greed they need not come back to rebirth again that is called the *Nibbāna* which is the highest aim in the Buddhism.

Buddhism insists that *Taṇhā* is the main cause of rebirth. The cycle of rebirth goes on continuously unless and until the cycle of *Taṇhā* is cut off. The psycho-physical process of existence continues till the continuation of unsatisfactoriness in life. There is no more continuing of this psycho physical-process of existence after the death of an *Arahant* who has overcome all kinds of craving and there is no more suffering for him. Therefore, it should be definitely understood that craving is the origin of ever continuing the arising of suffering in the lives of all beings, throughout all of their existences. In this world, there is *Kāma-Taṇhā* (sensual craving) and those who overcome this craving, are free from *Akata* (that are produced by a combination of causes), *Santāpa* (burning), *Viprināma* (change) and suffering connected with the maintenance of their wives and children. Thus, the desire to be wealthy, to be handsome, to compete, to compete with others etc. are the expansion of craving which entails rebirth or suffering. With regard to rebirth, the Buddha says that:

“It is that craving that leads downwards to rebirth, along with the lure and the lust that lingers longingly now here, now there, namely the craving for sensation, the craving for rebirth, the craving to have done with rebirth,”\(^\text{176}\)

This is indicated that in Buddhism, rebirth is caused by *Taṇhā*. *Taṇhā* makes us long for pleasure, and then cling to the pleasant

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\(^{176}\) S.N. III. p. 51.-TPC: (S.N. III/22. p. 25.-PTS)
objects. Such state is the cause of a new becoming. And becoming is the cause of rebirth again. With regard to this, the Buddha says

“That which we will, Brethren, and that which we intend to do and that wherewithal we are occupied: this becomes an object for the persistence of consciousness. The object being there, there comes to be a station of consciousness. Consciousness being stationed and growing, rebirth of renewed existence takes place in the future, and here from birth, decay-and-death, grief lamenting, suffering, sorrow, and despair come to pass. Such is the uprising of this entire mass of ill.

Even, if we do not will. Or intend to do, and yet occupied about something, this too becomes an object for the persistence of consciousness. The object being there, there comes to be a station of consciousness. Consciousness being stationed and growing, whence birth of renewed existence takes place in future, and here from birth, decay-and-death, lamenting, suffering, sorrow, and despair come to pass. Such is the uprising of this entire mass of ill.”\textsuperscript{177}

Furthermore, the Buddha says that:

“That which we will, brethren, and that which we intend to do, and that wherewithal we are occupied:--this becomes and object for the persistence of consciousness, the object, being there, become a station of consciousness. Consciousness being stationed and having grown, there comes, there is going to a coming there being a going to a coming there is decease and rebirth, there being decease and rebirth, old age-and-death happen in the future and grief, lamenting suffering, sorrow and despair, even such is the uprising of this entire mass of ill.”\textsuperscript{178}

\textsuperscript{177} S.N. II. p. 145.-TPC ; (S.N. II/38. p. 45.-PTS)

\textsuperscript{178} S.N. II/149.-TPC; (S.N. II/40. pp. 46-47.-PTS)
Above mentioned teaching of the Buddha is about the source of suffering of *Pañcakkhandha* or the life of all beings. If monk or a thoughtful man thinks of any object which is delightful and pleasurable, these things are objects of clinging (*Ārammaṇapaccaya*). If that object is clanged they are the basis of Karma-consciousness. After the karma-consciousness is developed a new becoming arises. If there is the becoming there is birth, i.e. the birth of *Pañcakkhandha* which is followed by suffering. Hence, it is seen that the birth of man is the result of *Tanhā*.

The birth of human life is a complicated phenomenon and is difficult to understand. Human being belongs to the category of *Jahābuja* as they are womb-born. Parents give birth to human life. The Buddha says, *“The congregation of three factors causes the womb-born.”*\(^{179}\) The three factors are:

1. The conjugal relationship
2. The adequate psychological condition of mother
3. The rebirth consciousness.

These three factors must take place simultaneously for the birth of human being and each one is equally important.

The Buddha tells about the birth of human life in the *Mahāṭaṅhāsāṅkhya-sutta* as follows:

*“Bhikkhus! It is on the conjunction of three things that there is conception. If there is here a coitus of parents, but it is not the Mother’s season and Gandhabba (rebirth-consciousness) is not Present, for so long there is no conception. If there is here a coitus of the parents and it is the mother’s season, but the Gandhabba is not present for so long*

\(^{179}\) M.N. I. p. 321.
there is no conception. But if monks, there is here a coitus of the parents and it is the mother’s season and the Gandhabba is present, it is on the conjunction. Bhikkhus, as the three factors come together, the life comes into existence in the womb. ”

The first two factors causing birth are quite natural that we see in this world, but what does the third factor, the rebirth consciousness (Gandhabba or Paṭisandhivīḷāṇā) mean. In reply to this, Phra Payutto says:

“It is said while one is dead, pictures of the past deeds (Kammanimitta) will appear, the previous experiences and the picture of the next existence in line with the past deeds leading to the existence of the new-born. The past deeds appear as the indication of the cause of existence. The previous soul or consciousness, it relatively and accumulatively continues. This is called Gandhabba.”

Gandhabba or rebirth-consciousness, also known as Pais and hiviḷāṇā and originated from Cutiviḷāṇā (death consciousness) of the dead being, is not something new that comes into existence in mother’s womb, but it is a continuation of its previous continuity or existence carried on in succession in a dormant form by the Saṁkhāras.

Cutiviḷāṇā and Patis and hiviḷāṇā are two different types of consciousness. When the former expires, the later arises. With the expiry of previous existence, the impressions of good and bad deeds, causing new existence, are carried forth by the Cutiviḷāṇā consciousness and it

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182 D.N. II. p.13.
all causes the arising of *Patis and hiviññāna* (rebirth-consciousness). Thus, *Patis and hiviññāna* is the result of *Cutiviññāna*.

So long as the re-generative actions and previous good or bad actions foster, the life will be born continuously as *Kamma* shares the responsibility for the birth of *Patisandhiviññāna*. When one does not attribute any result to *Patisandhiviññāna* in the new existence, all defilements are uprooted, and there will be no *Kamma*. The Buddha said

“*any action not accompanied by greed, hatred and illusion and not associated with greed, hatred and illusion such action is called good action, bears no blemish and result in happiness leading to extinction of the re-continuation of new action*”\(^{183}\)

When there is the extinction of all action and the fruits thereof, there will be no rebirth on account of regenerative action and as a result the cycle of existence is broken completely and finally. It is “*Bhavanirodha*”. It is the attainment of *Nibbāna*.

So, when the three factors come together timely, there begins life. But now we should see that how this birth-process in the womb does takes place step by step.

Having discussed the first process of life and continuation of *Viññāna* to some extent, I am mentioning the growing up and the steps of life in the womb as the Buddha told in *Indakasutta*:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Pathamaṅkalalamhoti} & \quad \text{Kalalāhotuabbudām} \\
\text{Abbudajāyatesi} & \quad \text{Pesinibbhattatighano} \\
\text{Ghanāpancasākhajāyanti} & \quad \text{Kesālomānakhāpica}\,^{184} \\
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{183}\) A.N. I. pp. 176-182.

This Form (Rūpa) first because Kalala (The embryo in the first week after conception), after that it became Abbuda, Pesi, Ghana and later five branches of the body appear on the lump gradually along with the appearance of hair on the head and the body and nail, etc.

The Buddhist explanation, it shows that the process of life begins from the slime which is called Kalala for seven days, from Kalala becomes thicker fluid as called Abbuda for seven days, then, it develops into Pesi (a reddish piece of meat) like the flesh of water melon as crushed, for another seven days. Now it becomes harder as a lump of meat there like an egg called Ghana. From the lump of meat, there develop the five branches as called Pañcasākhā and these seven days, two hands, two feet and on head take shapes.

The Process of human birth is presented step by step at the interval of seven days (for five steps):

1. Kalala - The water like slime is the beginning of human birth.
2. Abbuda - Like slime, but more thickly.
3. Pesi - Like a reddish piece of meat.
4. Ghana - It is a lump becoming harder.
5. Pañcasākhā - It has five Sākhās (i.e. main branches of the body).

In short, since the time of rebirth consciousness in the womb gradually within name weeks appear the sense organs as eye, ear, nose and tongue etc. From the ninth week up to the forty second week all limbs appear clearly.

From the above explanation, we can conclude that human’s life begins at the time of conception. It is also suggested that the first mind (Pathamacita) coincidentally appears with Kalalarūpa (Slime) which
takes place in the first week. Now it is quite evident when the life begins from the Buddhist point of view.\(^\text{185}\)

Thus, we see that since the time of *Patisandhiviññāṇa* (rebirth consciousness) in the womb, within nine weeks there gradually appear sense organs as eyes, ears, nose, tongue etc, and from the ninth week up to the forty second weeks, all limbs of the body appear clearly.

To sum up, the process of birth of life takes place with conception and conception takes place with the simultaneous assemblage of three conditions, i.e. the conjugal relationship of parents, the adequate psychological condition of mother, and the rebirth consciousness.

The Buddha’s biological knowledge regarding the growth of human life in the womb shows that he was not only the great philosopher, the social reformer and the preacher of *Dhamma*, but also a great biologist who could describe the process of human birth as clearly and scientifically.

Phra Debvedi (Prayuth Payutto) explains about the *Gandhabba* (rebirth Consciousness) as follows:

“Such being that is being born, was in the former realm. The ‘Soul’ or the last moment of consciousness is heading to rebirth under the cause of existence (*Gatimitta*). It is said that while one is dead, there will appear pictures of past deed (*Kammanimitta*), i.e., the previous experiences and the picture of next existence in line with the past deeds leading to the existence of the new born. The past deeds appear as the indication of the cause of existence. The previous soul or consciousness disappeared or merges into the appearance of a new ‘soul’ or

consciousness. It relatively and accumulatively continues. This is called Gandhabba”.

3.2 The Four Sustenance (Āhāra)

Basically, beings need food in order to live. Here, Sustenance (Āhāra) is used in preference to food. By the means of life, Āhāra was analyzed in Abhidhanappadhīpikā as “ĀharatibhalāyūnītiĀhāro”. That poem captures the meaning of Āhāra as source of energy and age. Inconsistently, the evidence for the following four sustenance was said by the Buddha that material food (Kavaliṁkārāhāra): the food that becomes a piece for eating e.g. boiled rice, sweet etc. This is the physical food for all living beings.

Contact as nutriment (Phassāhāra): There are six contacts; the six contacts of organs consisting of eye-contact, ear-contact etc. The contact as the basis of happy feeling leads to happy feeling. The contact as the basis of unhappy feeling leads to unhappy feeling. The contact as the basis of happy-unhappy feeling leads to happy-unhappy feeling. In conclusion, the contact as nutriment leads to three feeling. It is a special food of feeling.

Mental choice as nutriment (Manosañcetanāhāra): “It is volition which is a special food of consciousness. This leads to three forms of becomings namely sensuous becoming, form-becoming, and formless-becoming”.

Consciousness as nutriment (Viññāṇāhāra): it is mind that lead to conception of becoming the Nāma-rūpa.

The contact as nutriment is a factor having a form (body) arising from an action. It is the factor of form.
The contact as nutriment is for the living of all living beings. When it contacts with a happy object the happy feeling arises.

The mental choice as nutriment is for the living of all living beings by the power of good and deed because it makes the root of becoming. That is the cause of becoming.

The consciousness as nutriment is for the living of all living beings because of it the āma-rūpa as a whole is continuing. The vanishing Citta (Cutī-citta) i.e. the sentience acting at the close of one span of life, as cause, is followed by the preconception-consciousness (Paṭīsandhi-viññāna) as effect at the first conscious moment in the new life.

Thus, it is evident from the lines of the Sutta quoted above that craving is the base of producing and uprising for these four sustenance.

3.3 The Aims of Human Life.

Life, as we have seen, is the cycle of birth and rebirth. It is full of suffering. It begins due to ignorance and it may be ceased by gaining true and perfect knowledge.

But now the question arises is this life so useless that we strive life long to get rid of it? No, it is not so. Life is very valuable and especially the life of a human being. Human birth is regarded as the most superior most existence in this world. According to Buddhism, even gods have to take birth as human being to attain Buddha hood, i.e., Nibbāna.

The human being is entirely different from other animals in respect of mentality which is somewhat complicated. It is like dense forest that has no entrance and is difficult to penetrate, in comparison with the
nature of an animal which is much easier to understand.\textsuperscript{186}

Life is in it-self meaningful only when it is led in accordance with the requirement of its philosophy. Life in keeping with the dictates of natural desires and passions brings about only bondage and along with it a life of \textit{Saṁsāra}. The escape from what Buddha called ‘the wheel of becoming (\textit{Bhavacakra})’ lies in analyzing the life itself, laying bare all springs of the various modes of leading it.\textsuperscript{187}

Buddhism regards the human being is superior to all. Man is gifted with brain that can logically think and decide. This is the reason that the Buddha says that man while being tempted to perform evil deeds, can be properly directed towards the performance of good actions (\textit{KusalaKamma}).

According to Buddhism, there are three “immoral roots” (\textit{Akusalamula}), namely, lust (\textit{Lobha}), hatred (\textit{Dosa}), and delusion (\textit{Mohā}), which are regarded as the original cause of ignorance (\textit{Avijjā}).\textsuperscript{188}

Thus, the real nature of an ordinary man is always guided and controlled by ignorance. In the \textit{Dhammapada}, the Buddha says:

\textit{“Oh! Wise man, it is true that not easy to control are evil things, do not let greed and wickedness drag you to prolonged suffering.”}\textsuperscript{189}

Conducting one’s life so as to attain the three levels of \textit{Attha}, the benefits that are the objectives of life are:

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{186} Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai, 1982, \textit{The Teaching of Buddha (Buddhist Promoting foundation)}, p. 174.
\item \textsuperscript{188} D.N. pp. III, 245.
\item \textsuperscript{189} Dhp. V. p. 248.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
First the temporal objective or present benefit (Ditthadhammikattha):

Having good health, a strong body, freedom from disease, pleasant appearance and longevity, having work and income, honest livelihood, and economic self-reliance, having good status, being of good standing in the community, having a happy family, making one’s family worthy of respect, all of these should be righteously obtained and used or treated so as to produce rightful benefit and happiness both for oneself and for others.

Second, the spiritual objective or further benefit (Samparā-yikattha) are Warmth, deep appreciation and happiness through faith; having an ideal, pride in having a clean life, in having done only virtuous deeds, gratification in a worthwhile life, in having made sacrifices and done well, courage and confidence in having wisdom to deal with problems and guide one’s life, security and freedom from worry in having done good as a guarantee for the future life.

Third, the highest objective or greatest benefit (Paramattha) Not wavering in face of vicissitudes and changes, not being despondent or distressed because of attachments, being secure, calm, clear, cheerful and buoyant at all times, living and acting with wisdom, this looks at cause and conditions.

One who is able to attain from the second level of benefit upwards is known as a wise man (Pandita).

These three levels of objectives or benefits can be attained on three fronts:
First front: the objective for oneself or one’s own benefit (Attattha): i.e., the three levels of benefits explained above, which one should establish for oneself or develop one’s life toward.

Second front: the objective for others, or other people’s benefit (Parattha), the three levels of benefits explained above, which one should help other people successively achieve by inducing and encouraging them to develop their lives.

Third front: the mutual objective or benefit to both parties (Ubhayattha); the collective benefit, happiness and virtue of the community or society, including environmental conditions and factors, which we should help create and conserve in order to help both ourselves and others advance to the three levels of objectives mentioned above.  

3.4 The Way to attain the Aim of Life.

Buddhism considers the human birth as a matter of excellent fortune, for it is only human being who can develop himself and can attain the highest truth of life. Therefore, the Buddha said, “It is very difficult to be born as human”. The value of human life and human being rests in the development of human mind moving on to the highest level of Arahant. Buddhist ethics explains that the life of individual is valuable. If there is a question that what is the value of life, the Buddhist ethic’s answer is “moral”. In this context, the Buddha pronounced the following stanza:

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“Na jaccāvasalohoti, najaccāhotebrāhanno, KammunāVasalohoti, Kummunāhotibrāhmano”\(^{192}\)

None is non-brāhmaṇa by birth, none is brāhmaṇa by birth. By deeds is one a non-brāhmaṇa, by deeds is brāhmaṇa.”

A fully developed human being is one who knows how to live in accordance with the Dhamma and maintain harmony in social relationship and with the society. One whose mind is ethically and morally developed, one who performs physical, vocal and mental deeds according to morality, one who develops his conduct and maintains good relation for general welfare of the society and one who tries to strengthen not his physical strength, but also mental strength is in true sense a human being.

One whose mind is developed and understands the value of this invaluable life must have following qualities:\(^{193}\)

1. *Sappurisadhamma*: These seven Dhammas are behaviors of good persons. They are:

   (1) *Dhammaṇṇutā* (knowing the law) Knowing the principles on which things are based and which must be dealt with in the process of everyday life. It includes understanding the duties required for livelihood and social position, the principles upon which they are based, and the methods required for the successful performance. This quality frees the mind from attachment to the world.

   (2) *Atthaṅñtā* (knowing the meaning or objective) It is understanding the meaning of life and realizing its highest objective.

\(^{192}\) M.N. Vol. II. p. 384.

3. *Attaññutā* (Knowing oneself) Knowing the limitations and potentialities of one’s own capacity and knowing how to abandon those aspects of character which hinder the moral development and utilizing the positive qualities for the benefit of one’s own self and others.

4. *Mattaññutā* (knowing moderation) Knowing the correct use and consumption of material things, in speech, work and action, in rest and leisure.

5. *Kālaññutā* (Knowing occasion) knowing the proper action for the particular circumstance, and distribution of time for duties and dealing with others.

6. *Parisaññutā* (Knowing company) Knowing the appropriate behavior and action in different social situations.

7. *Buggalaññutā* (Knowing Persons) Knowing differences in human temperaments, abilities and qualities, Knowing others’ strength and weakness and knowing how to put the right person in the right place.

These above mentioned seven qualities are known as “*Sapputisadhamma.*”¹⁹⁴ These are the qualities of one who is truly a human being. To know the meaning of life or understand the objective or persons etc. is not enough to make a person morally high. He should cultivate other virtues also which may enable him to live in the society as a respectable member. Such virtues which we should develop are following.

2. *Sucarita:* Three ways of good conduct-It includes good action, true and useful speech, and wholesome and right thoughts. They are:

   1. *Kāyasucarita* (good bodily conduct)
   2. *Vacīsucarita* (good verbal conduct)

¹⁹⁴ A.N. IV. p. 113.
(3) *Mano sucarita* (good mental conduct).¹⁹⁵

1) *Kāyasucarita*: Bodily good actions are as below:
   
   (a) Abstaining from killing and hunting
   
   (b) Abstaining from stealing and creation
   
   (c) Abstaining from wrong conduct towards loved ones.

2) *Vacī Sucarita*: Vocal good actions which should be performed are as follow:
   
   (a) Abstaining from wrong speech, lying and deceiving
   
   (b) Abstaining from slanderous or malicious talk
   
   (c) Abstaining from coarse or vulgar speech
   
   (d) Abstaining from frivolous speech.

3) *Mano Sucarita*: To develop good mental state are needed following virtues are needed:

   (a) Refraining from thoughts of covetousness and greed
   
   (b) Refraining from hateful and destructive thoughts
   
   (c) Cultivating right view (*Sammādīthi*).¹⁹⁶

These above mentioned ten qualities are known as the *Kusalakamma Patha*, the ten ways of skilful action. They are also called as *Dhammacariyā* (moral conduct) and *Ariyadhamma* (civilized)¹⁹⁷ qualities. Besides the above-mentioned ten skilful actions performed through the channel of body, speech and mind there are five precepts, preached by the Buddha, which should be followed for personal as well as social development.

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¹⁹⁵ D.N. III. p. 215.
¹⁹⁶ M.N. I. p. 287.
The five precepts of the *Dhamma* are meant for the moral development of a man. They are as below:

1. Abstaining from killing and harming living beings
2. Abstaining from stealing and cheating
3. Abstaining from adultery, wrong sexual behavior
4. Abstaining from lying or deceptive speech
5. Abstaining but intoxicants which not only damage one’s own well-being, but also threaten the security of others.\(^{198}\)

These five precepts are the detailed form of previously described bodily and vocal skilful actions.

**The Conception of Nibbāna**

*Nibbāna* is regarded as the highest goal of the Endeavour of a Buddhist aspirant. Hence, it may be regarded as the central theme in Buddhist religion and philosophy.\(^{199}\) *Nibbāna* is one of the many terms for cessation of suffering in the orthodox Buddhist scriptures. The other terms like *Vimutti* (salvation), *Vimokkha* (deliverance), *Norodha* (extinction) and *Dukkhanta* (the end of suffering) and so on, are synonyms of *Nibbāna*.\(^{200}\)

The word *Nibbāna*, in *Pāli*, is known as *Nirvāṇa* in Sanskrit. It is composed of “*Nī*”, and “*Vana*” or *bāna*. “Nī” is a prefix which means “without” or “annihilation”, it is a negative prefix implying negation or absence. “Vāna” or “*bāna*” means “craving” (*tanhā*). Thus, it means annihilation of craving. It is the craving, which acts like an arrow. It acts

\(^{198}\) A.N. III. pp. 203. 275.


like a cord to connect the series of lives of any particular individual in the course of his wandering in “samsāra”. “Nibbāna” is also derived from “Ni” + vu (to wave). There it means non-craving or departure from craving (figuratively, waving). In this case, it means the blowing out, the extinction or the annihilation.\textsuperscript{201} Nibbāna also means the blowing out, as it is composed of ni = absence, and vā = to blow (Ni + Vā); it signifies blowing out or extinction of fires (rāga, dosa and moha).\textsuperscript{202} Etymologically speaking, the term nibbāna means to be extinguished or to be cool.

From the above definition it is clear that the popular usage of the word nibbāna is meant to extinguish the fire of lust, of ill-will, of infatuation, birth, decay and death, sorrow and grief, woe, lamentation and despair. Thus in nibbāna, the coolness, calmness or peacefulness is naturally attained.

The interpretation of Theravāda Buddhism which asserts that samsāra is totally undesirable is chiefly derived from the Pali Sutta statements which contrast samsāra with nibbāna. One frequently finds Nibbāna defined as ‘the ceasing of becoming’ (bhavanirodhonibbānam),\textsuperscript{203} “the end of birth and death” (jātimaranassaantam),\textsuperscript{204} “the cessation of dukkha” (dukkhanirodho).\textsuperscript{205} In contradistinction to Sāṃsāra, the phenomenal existence, Nibbāna is eternal (dhuva), desirable (subha), and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Bihkshu Satyapal, \textit{An Analytical Study of Death in Pāli Tipitaka}, 1986, p. 265.
\item S. II. p. 117.
\item SN. p. 467.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
happy (sukha).\textsuperscript{206}

For the analogy of the \textit{nibbāna} in \textit{Mililndapanho}, it tries to state the nature of \textit{“Nibbāna”} with the similarity marking in certain things. They are as follow: (1) \textit{“Nibbāna”} is unturned by evil dispositions like the lotus by water. (2) It always removes the thirst for the lust, future life, and worldly prosperity. It cures the fever of all evil prosperities. (3) It has medicinal effects. It is termed as nectar (\textit{Amata}). It puts to an end of evil effect. (4) It has the qualities of food, which supports life, overcomes weakness, and generates magical power. (5) It is the home of many great creatures that are in full bloom with purity, knowledge, and emancipation. (6) It is above birth, decay, and death. It is independent, unobstructed, and unconquerable. (7) It is like a gem, which satisfies desire, gives pleasure, and is full of luster. (8) It is similar to the skimming of ghee as pleasant taste. (9) It has matchless perfumes like the sandalwood. (10) It is immovable, inaccessible like mountain peak. It is much exalted, free from desire to please, and resentment, and bliss unalloyed.\textsuperscript{207}

The real nature of \textit{Nibbāna} cannot be positively explained, it is true, but something may be said of its qualities. Peace and bliss are described as the qualities of \textit{Nibbāna}. It is generally conceived as a state of highest happiness. It is a state that transcends physical and mental pains which are common among all beings. All kinds of happiness in all planes of existence are incomparable with happiness of \textit{Nibbāna} where all cravings become extinct.

\textsuperscript{206} Narada Mahathera, \textit{The Buddha and His Teaching}, 1988, p. 499.

In brief, it can be expressed that Nibbāna or Nirvāṇa is the extinction of ignorance (avijjā), craving (tānha), grasping (upādāna), and kamma (actions), which are the fuel of rebirth. In other words, the cessation of the process of becoming is Nibbāna. Nibbāna is Dhamma, it is Lokuttara Dhamma (the supramundane) and it is also Asaṅkhata Dhamma (the unconditioned) an experience that cannot verbally be explained because of its subtlety. It is, therefore, not so difficult to describe the state of Nibbāna negatively, as to what Nibbāna is in its positive connotations, for it is really difficult to express it in worldly language.

**Two kinds of Nibbāna.**

Nibbāna is viewed as twofold according to the way it is experienced before and after the death of an Arahant. The key passage of Nibbāna in life and beyond death is found in Itivuttaka. The Buddha said:

"These two kinds of Nibbāna the Tathāgata, who possess the eye (of wisdom), is freed from cravings (tānha) and dogma (diṭṭhi), is of such qualities, has proclaimed: One which is attainable at present is called Sa-upādisesa because of the exhaustion of cravings leading to becoming (bhava). Another where occurs the complete extinction of all becomeings and which is attainable after death is called Anupādisesa..."\(^{208}\)

1) Sa-upādisesa-Nibbāna – The Nibbāna element with a basis remaining. It is that of an Arahant who is liberated from the shackles of saṁsāra and is still in the embodied state possessed of the five aggregates. This, as it is explained, refers to Nibbāna of the disciple who attains the state of Arahantship with the complete exhaustion of lust

(rāga), hatred (dosa) and delusion (moha). A Bhikkhu who attains this Sa-upādisesa-Nibbāna is still alive. Since he is still a living being, he continues to experience pain or physical suffering which is the lot of the human body. But since he is absolutely free from all defilements (kilesa) and intoxicants of passion (āsava), his mind will not be affected by such physical pain. With the exhaustion of all defilements his mental suffering is completely extirpated. He fully enjoys the bliss of Nibbāna even when he is still alive. Because the body, the composite of the five fundamental aggregates, of one who attains this state of Nibbāna still remains, it is thus called Sa-upādisesa-Nibbāna, a nibbāna attainable with residual substratum. The Buddha after enlightenment and many of his disciples who attained the state of Arahantship are the representative examples of those who attained this kind of Nibbāna.

2) Anupādisesa-Nibbāna literally means Nibbāna that one attains without any residue. It is sometimes called Parinibbāna. It is the state of Nibbāna reached by the Arahant after death. In this state of Nibbāna, the five aggregates, form (rūpa), feeling (vedanā), perception (saññā), mental formation (saṅkhāra) and consciousness (viññāṇa) and all that pertains to the aggregates, have completely ceased. As to this kind of Nibbāna the Buddha explained:

“What, Bhikkhus, is Anupādisesa-Nibbāna? A Bhikkhu in this religion is an Arahat, freed from the intoxicants of passion, has the religious life fulfilled to perfection, has done what should be done, has the burden put down, has his personal advantage attained, has the fetters in becoming exhausted, has been released with right realization. The
feelings in the body of this Bhikkhu which can never be excited by craving become extinct. This, Bhikkhus, I call Anupādisesa Nibbāna.”

In short, Anupādisesa Nibbāna is attained with the complete extinction of the physical and mental faculties of the Arahant, while Sa-Upādisesa Nibbāna is attained with the extinction of all defilements, and the attainder continues to live.

To sum up: Nibbāna as conceived in Theravāda Buddhism is a state attained by one who has got rid of all cravings which are the potential of a new life. The liberated one (Tathāgata), after passing away into Nibbāna, is not annihilated; but he cannot be said to exist, or both exist and not exist, or neither exist nor not exist. He becomes indescribable, being beyond the grasp of language. The state of Nibbāna exists, but its existence is beyond space (location) and time (duration). It transcends empirical determinations. It is the only reality for one who has attained it. It is where that occurs the end of the process of births and death (sāṁsāra), the end of Kamma and rebirth: it is the complete extinction of all suffering.

In Theravāda Buddhist formulation of the way to Nibbāna, three stages are recognized: morality (sīla), concentration of mind (samādhi) and liberating knowledge (paññā). We shall describe each of these three stages as below.

The Meanings and Characteristics of Nibbāna

“What is Nibbāna, friend? The destruction of lust, the Destruction of hatred, the destruction of delusion – that friend, is called Nibbāna”

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210 S.I.V. p. 252.
Here, we will discuss the last ultimate reality, namely, *Nibbāna*. *Nibbāna* is one ultimate reality distinct from other ultimate realities, namely, *Citta* (Consciousness), *Cetasikas* (Mental Factors) and *Rūpa* (Matter). Because *Nibbāna* has nothing to do with mind and matter and with conditional states, it cannot be a special kind of mind or matter.

The word “*Nibbāna*” (Sanskrit *Nirvāna*) can be derived in a number of ways: *Nibbāna* is composed of “*Ni*” and “*Vāna*” = *Nivāna* or *Nibbāna*. “*Ni*” is a particle implying negation. It means extinction, cessation, going out, allayment, cooling, peace, happiness and perfection. “*Vāna*” means weaving or craving. Which is called “*Vāna*” in the sense that it (*Vāna*) operates as if: it was a thread or cord to connect one life with another.\(^{211}\) Therefore, *Nibbāna* means “*Tanhakkhaya*” (absence of craving or extinction of thirst). According to the commentaries, *Nibbāna* means “*Freedom from Desire*” (*Nir+vāna*). *Nibbāna* constitutes the highest and ultimate goal of all Buddhist aspirations, i.e. absolute extinction of that life-affirming will manifested as Greed, Hate and Delusion, and convulsively clinging to existence; and therewith also the ultimate and absolute deliverance from all future *rebirth*, old age, disease and death, from all suffering and misery.\(^{212}\) In conventional term, a person who attained *Nibbāna* will escape the cycle of the ever-recurring cycle and is not merely an escape from “*sin and hell*”.

What *Nibbāna* is like:

With regard to this, we find, in the *Udāna* of the *Khuddhkanikāya* where the Buddha has said about *Nibbāna* that:


“Monks, there exists that condition where neither Earth nor water nor fire nor air is: wherein is neither the sphere of infinite space nor of infinite consciousness nor of nothingness nor of neither-consciousness-nor unconsciousness nor of nether-consciousness; where there is neither this world nor a world beyond nor both together nor moon-and-sun. thence, monks, I declare is no coming to birth; thither is no going (from life); there is no duration, thence is no falling; there is no arising. It is not something fixed; it moves not on, It’s not based on anything (Anāramaṇaṃ). That indeed is the end of ill or suffering.”

From the above mentioned passage, we find that it is most difficult to express in words or to describe what Nibbāna is. Although the Buddha, himself, has recognized that there are no words in human being’s vocabulary to express the nature of Nibbāna, he declares that there certainly is what can be called Nibbāna, but it cannot be compared with anything in the world around us. An Arahant, who can cease the whole defilements, can know or understand about the Nibbāna, but ordinary people cannot understand about the Nibbāna, When common people can cease the ignorance, craving and grasping, he can know or understand about Nibbāna by himself. The Dhamma points out the characteristics of Nibbāna thus:

“Brahmin, Nibbāna is seen in this life, it is a thing not involving time, inviting one to come and see, leading onward, to be realized for themselves by the wise.”

From the above quotation, we come to know that Nibbāna does not depend on the time, if one practices or follows the Buddha’s teaching, he
can attain the *Nibbāna* and realize it himself by wisdom (*Sandiṭṭhikām*) in this very life. It does not depend on the time (*Akālikaṃ*) and it is the highest that everybody can realize by oneself without distinction of caste. With Chance and the diligence to follow the Buddha’s teaching, people can be said to have an occasion to attain or realize *Nibbāna*.

**The Quality of Nibbāna**

*Nibbāna* is the highest goal of life, after the attainment of it, the man becomes free from repeated existence. That man becomes calm and free from all kinds of desire in this very life. At regards the quality of *Nibbāna*, the Buddha says that:

“*Nibbānam Paramāṃ Sukham; Nibbāna is the highest bliss*.“\(^{215}\)

Or

“*Natthisantiparamāṃ Sukham; there is no happiness higher than tranquility.*”\(^{216}\)

Here, *Santi* or tranquility is the synonym of *Nibbāna*. It is said that amongst all the happiness, *Nibbāna* is the highest happiness because it is free from the whole defilements, namely, Lust, Hatred and Delusion, which cause great sufferings. After the root of suffering is ceased, the happiness arises instead. Here, one who receives the highest bliss is the *Arahant* and he is only still living, but an *Arahant* who comes to the end of life in the world, is neither suffering nor feeling happiness. Regarding this, the Buddha says about Bāhiya’s *Nibbāna* in the *Udāan* of the *Khuddakanikāya* thus:

“*Where water, earth, fire air no footing find There shine no stars, no sun is there displayed There gleams no moon; no darkness there is*

\(^{215}\)Khu.Dh. p. 25.-TPC: (Dh. Verse – 204.)

seen. So when the sage, the brāhmaṇa, by wisdom of his own self hath pierced up to truth, from form and no form, pleasure-and-pain he’s freed.”  

From the above verse, the Buddha has pointed out that an arahant is free from both suffering and happiness after his death.

The way to attain the aim of Human Life (Nibbāna) through Middle path: the Way of Nibbāna

Magga

(Dukkhaniruddhagāminīpadāariyasacca)

The magga is the Fourth Noble Truth, which is the way leading to the cessation of suffering. This is known as the “Middle Path”. It is so-called because it avoids two extremes; it is said that: “one extreme being the search for happiness through the pleasures of the senses, which is low, common, unprofitable and the way of the ordinary people: the other being the search for happiness through self-mortification in different forms of asceticism, which is painful, unworthy and unprofitable. Having himself first tried these two extremes, and having found them to be useless, the Buddha discovered through personal experience the Middle Path which gives vision and knowledge, which leads to Calm, Insight, Enlightenment, and Nirvāṇa. This Middle Path is generally referred to as the Noble Eightfold Path (Ariya-AtthaṅgikaMagga).”

The above passage tells us about the relation of the Middle path which associates with the Eightfold Path and thus to describe the concept of Eight factors, we, therefore, firstly name it as follow:

“Katamañcabhikkhavedukkhanirodhagāminīpatipadāariyasaccam, ayamevaariyoatatthaṅgikomaggo. Seyyathiddamsammājīvo, sammāvā-yāmo, sammāsati, sammāsamādhi. Idamvucactibhikkhavedukkhanirod-hagāminīpatipadāariyasaccam.”\(^{219}\)

The Eightfold Path comes to play its important role with the Fourth Truth (Magga).

**The Eightfold Path (Atthaṅgika-magga)**

The Buddhist doctrine of Noble Path has its origin in the three groups of training and they are morality or good conduct (Sīla), mental-development (samādhi), and wisdom or insight (paññā). It has been said that: “The eight steps of the path are divided into these three ways of practice as follows: Right speech (Sammāvācā), Right Action (Sammākammanta) and Right livelihood (Sammāājīva) which belong to the way of wisdom.”\(^{220}\) We can understand its process through this way

1. Sammādiṭṭhi (Right View),
2. Sammāsaṅkappa (Right Thought),
3. Sammāvācā (Right Speech),
4. Sammādammanta (Right Action),
5. Sammāājīva (Right Speech),
6. Sammāvāyāma (Right Effort),
7. Sammā sati (Right mindfulness) and
8. Sammāsamādhi (Right concentration).

On the other hand, Eightfold Path is also called The Middle Path of which its purpose is to show a path which is not of extreme performance for attaining the state of noble peace. And it’s the right, safe and perfect

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\(^{219}\) Dhammacakkappavattanavagga, S.S., Suttantapiṭaka, p. 535.  
\(^{220}\) Dhammacakkappavattanavagga, S.S., Suttantapiṭaka, p. 50.
way for attaining Nibbāṇa, and according to the aspect, these noble paths, have three categories of Middle way: Sīla, samādhi and paññā:

1. Sīla (morality) – Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood

2. Samādhi (concentration) – Right effort, Right Mindfulness and Right concentration


These above mentioned eight fold factors illustrate the comprehensive nature of the path of moral perfection. This path is preached for both, the well – being of individuals and the society. It is both descriptive and prescriptive.

The term Sammā (Sanskrit word -samyak) prefixed to the eight factors is generally translated as ‘right’, not because it is based on an absolute truth but because it is comprehensive or complete (as in SammāSambuddha, the completely is perfectly the enlightened one). Sammā is contraty to wrong or micchā (Sanskrit word - Mithyā), which again is not based on the absolutely false but on the partial or confused. The moral conception of right and wrong are therefore corollaries of the epistemological notions of the truth and confused, not of the absolutely true and false dichotomy.\(^{221}\) To follow the eight fold path, it is necessary to have on overview of the eight factors that lead to the end of suffering.

Wisdom Path

Sammāditthi

(Right View)

The right view means knowledge which originates in the four Noble Truths, it has been said that:

\(^{221}\) David J. Kalupahana, 1994, A History of Buddhist Philosophy, p. 103.
“Right view consists in the fact of the fact of suffering, of its origin, of the possibility of its destruction, and of the way which leads to the annihilation of suffering.”

“Right understanding is the highest wisdom which sees the ultimate Reality. According to Buddhism there are two sorts of understanding: what we generally call understanding is knowledge, an accumulated memory. This is called “knowing accordingly” (anubodha).

Real deep understanding is called “penetration (pativedha)”, seeing a thing in its true nature, without name and label.”

This right understanding is endowed with deep understanding, seeing things according to their true, penetrating knowledge which works together with highest wisdom (paññā).

Sammāsaṅkappa
(Right Thought)

Right Thought manifests the abandoning of wrong thinking. The Buddha described wrong thinking as free from:

1. Sensuality (Nekkhamnasamkappa),
2. Ill-will (AbyapadaSamkappa),

Right view and Right thoughts serve as spring bonds on the path towards moral progress.


224 D.N. II.p. 312.
Morality Path
Sammāvācā
(Right Speech)

The Buddha’s doctrine is often described as being well-spoken (Svākkhānta), not because it conforms to or mirrors an ultimate truth, but because it is based on experience (Sandithika), which is not confined to a particular time (Akālika) but is verifiable (Ehipassika), and goal directed (Opanayika), and whose meaning is realizable by intelligent human beings. Right speech means refraining from:

1. Telling lies,
2. Back biting and talk that may cause enmity, disunity, disharmony among people,
3. Harsh, rude, impolite and abusive language,
4. Idle, useless and foolish gossip.

Sammākammanta
(Right action)

Right action means leading moral, honorable and peaceful life. It promotes our conduct. It admonishes us that we should abstain from:

1. Destroying life (Pāṇātipātāveramanī),
2. Stealing (Adinnādānāveramanī),
3. Illegitimate sexual relationship (Kāmesumicchācārāveramanī).

Sammājīva
(Right livelihood)

Right livelihood refers to abstinence from unrighteous livelihood and earning one’s own living by righteous means. The Buddha enumerated four features of good life:

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225 D.N. p. 293.
1. *Atthisukha* (happiness caused by the livelihood earned by one’s own efforts)

2. *Bhogasukha* (happiness caused by enjoyment of legally acquired wealth)

3. *Anaṇasukha* (happiness due to being free from debt)

4. *Anavajjasukha* (happiness due to being free from blame).

**Mentality Path**

**SammāVāyāma**

(*Right effort*)

Right effort is the energetic will. One must effort in the right direction. It refers to four efforts:

1. Sāṃvarapadhāna (preventive effort to avoid the arising of unwholesome states of mind that arise).

2. Pahānapadhāna (effort at relinquishing the evil and unwholesome thoughts that have already arisen).

3. Bhāvanāpadhana (effort to develop wholesome thoughts that are yet to arise).

4. Anurakkhanāpadhāna (effort to maintain wholesome thoughts that have already arisen in the mind).\(^{227}\)

**Sammā sati**

(*Right mindfulness*)

Right mindfulness or attentiveness is to be diligently aware, mindful and attentive with regard to everyday activities, physical or mental both. It is the awareness with regard to the functioning of physical personality (*Kāya*), feelings or sensations (*Vedanā*), thought (*Citta*), and

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ideas (*Dhammas*).\(^{228}\) Sati is the vehicle and transport mechanism for *Paññā* (wisdom). Without sati, wisdom cannot be developed, retrieved or applied. Sati is not memory or remembering although it is related to them, nor is it mere heedfulness or carefulness. It make us aware of what we are about to do. It is characterized by speed and agility.

The practice of mindfulness aims at knowing things as their reality. The process of cultivating mindfulness is known as insight development (*Vipassanābhāvanā*).

**SammāSamādhi**

*(Right concentration)*

Right concentration is extremely important as it enables one to make decision regarding behavior. The word Samadhi or concentration means stabilizing the mind or stilling it or establishing one wontedness of the mind (*Ekaggatā*).\(^{229}\) The practice of concentration aims at calming the mind and is known as *Samathabhāvanā*.

Right concentration leads to four stages of *Dhyāna*:

1. In the first stage of *Dhyāna* – unwholesome thoughts like sensuous lust, ill – will, worry, restlessness are discarded and feeling of joy and happiness are maintained.

2. In the second stage of *Dhyāna* – one wontedness is developed and felling of joy and happiness are still retained.

3. In the third stage of *Dhyāna* – the feeling of joy also disappears while the disposition of happiness still remains.

4. In the fourth stage of *Dhyāna*– sensations, even of happiness and unhappiness, of joy and sorrow, disappear and pure

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equanimity and awareness remain.

This eight fold noble path is not meant for the monks or Arahant one but for the people from all walks of life. This path includes the goal of good conduct and morality along with liberation. This middle path can be defined as the way of life leading to liberation (Nibbāna). Nibbāna is the blissful end for which everyone must strive, and which, when attained, is worth the pains to win it.230

The Buddha says:

“Cut off all attachments, drive all longing from your heart, when the heart is at rest you will attain peace and happiness.”231

Thus, human life, rooted in ignorance, being with birth in this world of unending suffering but after cultivating moral values of human life and following the path of Dhamma the ultimate aim may be achieved.

The Buddha’s Teachings on Supra Mundane State

The members A Buddhist society have been classified into two categories: the common person (puthujjhana) and Noble Person (ariya-puggala). Accordingly, the Buddha’s teachings have been categorized into two main groups: the teachings meant for the mundane state of common persons and the teachings meant for the supra-mundane state of Noble Persons (ariya-puggala). Hereafter, the Buddha’s teachings on the supra-mundane state (Nibbāna) will be discussed.

The Division of Theravāda Buddhists


The Buddhist society (parisā) mainly comprised of two distinguished persons: common person (Puthujjana) and noble person (Ariyapuggala). In other words, there are two categories of members of Buddhist society: common persons who lead their life in the mundane state and noble persons who enter the path of salvation. These two kinds of members of Buddhist society differ greatly from each other with regard to their spiritual attainment. These will be dealt with in detail in the following section.

1. The Common Person (puthujjhana)

The word “Puthujjhana” has been defined by Buddhist Dictionary as “one of the many folk, wording, ordinary man, whether one is layman or laywoman, monk or nun, who is still possessed of all the ten fetters (samyojana) binding to the round of rebirths, and therefore has not yet reached any of the four stages of holiness (ariya-puggala)”.* In fact, the common people are bound by all the ten fetters (samyojana) and are not able to reach any of four stages of holiness (ariya-puggala). They form membership of the society, and tend to commit both actions: good and bad, since they are fettered by the defilements. The ten fetters (samyojana) which tie a person in the mundane state (puthujjhana) are shown below:

(i) Sakkāyadiṭṭhi: False view of individuality; wrong belief in the five aggregates (khandhas) by taking them as a Permanent Self.

(ii) Vicikicchā: Doubt or uncertainty of belief concerning the Triple Gem, the path and fruition, and Nibbāna.

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(iii) *Sīlabbataparāmāsa*: Adherence to rules and rituals; wrong intention of the observance of precepts and the practice of morality.

(iv) *Kāmarāga*: The feeling of delight in, or clinging to, sensual lust.

(v) *Paṭigha*: Repulsion or irritation including annoyance, indignation and the like.

(vi) *Rūparāga*: Greed for fine-material existence; attachment to realms of form.

(vii) *Arūparāga*: Greed for immaterial existence; attachment to formless realms.

(viii) *Māna*: Conceit or pride; the source of self-exaltation and treating others with contempt.

(ix) *Uddhacca*: Restlessness; distracting thought due to absence of self-control, which in turn is due to ignorance.

(x) *Avijjā*: Ignorance; this refers to ignorance of the Four Noble Truths in all degrees and aspects, implying an imperfect understanding of the subtle problems of life.\(^{233}\)

The first five of these are called “lower fetters” (*orambhāgiya-saṁyojana*), as they tie a man to the sensuous world, whereas the latter five are called “higher fetters” (*uddhambhāgiya-saṁyojana*) as they tie a man to the higher world that is the fine material and immaterial world.\(^ {234}\)

2. The Noble Person (Ariya-Puggala)

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The word “Ariya-Puggala” in Pāḷi and “ārya-pudgala” in Sanskrit means a “Noble Person” one who is at any stage of the Noble Path (ariya-magga).\(^{235}\) He is a person who stands beyond the ten fetters (saṁyojana) and reaches the supra mundane state. There are four kinds of Noble Persons, namely:

(i) The Sotāpanna (Stream-Enterer)

(ii) The Sakadāgāmī (Once-Returner)

(iii) The Anāgāmī (Non-Returner) and

(iv) The Arhat (Perfected One).\(^ {236}\) These characteristics of four Noble Persons will be explained briefly in the following sections.

(I). The Sotāpanna (Stream-Enterer)

The term “Sotāpanna” consists of two words: one is “Sotā” which means “stream” and another is “panna” which means one who has entered; hence, in the Theravāda tradition, the word “sotāpanna” means one who has entered the stream that is destined to merge, finally, in the ocean of Nibbāna. The Stream Enterer reaches this stage by destroying the first three fetters (saṁyojana) in successive order; it is very significant as the first step to lead to the way of Nibbāna, he cannot longer fall back on the ways of an unenlightened or ordinary person (puthújījana).

The Buddha, in the Aṅguttara Nikāya mentions it: “Such as one, by destroying three fetters is a stream-winner, one not doomed to the

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\(^{236}\) D. I. p. 156.
Down-fall, one assured, one bound for enlightenment”.\textsuperscript{237} Similarly, it is said in the \textit{Dhammapāda}: “Better than sole sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, better even than lordship over all the worlds is the supra mundane Fruition of Stream Entrance (\textit{Sotāpanna})”.\textsuperscript{238} \textit{Sotāpanna} has been categorized into three groups as follows:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{i. Ekabījī} (the Single-Seed): he just takes one birth as a man and then makes an end of suffering. Such a man is called ‘One germinating only once more’
  \item \textit{ii. Kolankola} (the Clan to Clan): he fares and wanders up and down in two or three families and makes an end of suffering. Such a man is called ‘One passing from one noble family to another’
  \item \textit{iii. Sattakkhattuparamasa} (the Seven Times a Most): he fares and wanders up and down among \textit{devas} and humankind seven times at most and then makes an end of suffering. Such a man is called “One with seven births at the utmost”.\textsuperscript{239}
\end{itemize}

\textbf{(II). The Sakadāgāmī (Once-Returner)}

The \textit{Sotāpanna}, who destroys the three lower fetters, who enables to reduce the roots of lust (\textit{rāga}), hatred (\textit{dosa}) and delusion (\textit{moha}), is called “\textit{Sakadāgāmī}” (Once-Returner). He abides by the law of morality (\textit{sīla}), and possesses the strength of mental concentration (\textit{samādhi}) and insight (\textit{paññā}). He is a once-returner, that is, he will come back to this world just once more and then attains \textit{Nibbāna}.\textsuperscript{240} The Buddha describes

\textsuperscript{238} Dhp. p. 178.
\textsuperscript{239} Cf. A. I. p. 232: IV. p. 380: V. p. 120.
\textsuperscript{240} A. I. p. 232.
the Sakadāgāmī in the AnguttaraNikāya: “Moreover a monk keeps the laws of morality in full, he is moderately given to mental concentration, moderately given to striving for insight such a one, by destroying three fetters and weakening those of lust, malice and delusion, is a once-returner. Coming back to this world just once more he will make an end of ill (suffering)”.

(III). The Anāgāmī (Non-Returner)

The Sakadāgāmī (Once-Returner), who practices in the level of law of morality (sīla), of mental concentration (samādhi) and of insight (paññā) perfectly, and destroys two lower fetters, is called “Anāgāmī” (Non-Returner). In other words, he will not return to the human state of existence in any future life. If he has not reached the last path in this very life, then after death he will be born in the realm of which is the abode of the pure called Suddhāvāsa. As it is mentioned in the AnguttaraNikāya: “Such as one by the destruction of the five fetters that bind to the lower worlds, takes birth spontaneously (in the Pure Abodes), there to pass away, destined never to return thence”. There are five levels of Anāgāmī as mentioned in the AnguttaraNikāya: they are:

One who reaches Nibbāna within the first half of the life?
One who reaches Nibbāna after crossing half of the life-time?
One who reaches Nibbāna with exertion?
One who reaches Nibbāna without exertion?

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One who passes through up-stream of life to the highest abode of the pure?243

(IV). The Arhat (Perfected One)

The “Anāgāmī” (Non-Returner), who destroyed the ten fetters (Saṁyojana) completely, and received the full final attainment of Nibbāna, is called “Arhat” (Perfected One). On other words, the word “Khīnāsava” (one whose all cankers are destroyed) is a name for the Arhat.245 Arhat is called “Asekha” (a disciple perfected in training, one beyond training, and adept).246 With regard to the quality of Arhat, the Dhammapāda states thus: “The man who is without blind faith, who knows the Uncreated, who has severed all links, destroyed all causes (for karma, good and evil), and thrown out all desires – he, truly, is the most excellent of men”.247 His birth is the last birth, because of his full enlightenment; he will pass away into Parinibbāna. This idea is confirmed in Aṅguttara Nikāya: “He strictly observes the rudiments of the holy life, the constituents of the holy life, he is established in morality, he trains himself in the rules of the training by undertaking them. Such a one, by destroying the āsavas (canker). In this very life he

243 Cf. Ibid., A.I. p. 233.
244 D. II. p.81; S. IV. p. 256. Āsavas (canker) are divided into three kinds, namely, (i) Kāmāsava – canker of sense-desire, (ii) Bhavāsava – canker of becoming, and (iii) Avijjāsava – canker of ignorance.
245 Nyanatiloka, Buddhist Dictionary, 1949, p. 86.
247 Dhp. 97.
himself comes to know thoroughly the heart’s release, the release by insight, and attaining it abides therein”.248

According to Buddhism, these four Noble Persons (Ariya-Puggala) are regarded as the ideal members and persons worthy of respect in the society, because they always perform good deeds physically, orally, and mentally.

3.5 The Summary of the Chapter.

The Evolution is a process of life in this world. All creatures are born to struggle as long as existence continues. Birth is called (Jāti) in Pāli or in Sanskrit language and this word Birth (Jāti) is called “Birth” or “rebirth” in English.

In the traditional Buddhist languages of Pāli and Sanskrit, there is no word corresponding exactly to the English “Rebirth”. A rebirth, that is, the state one is born into, is referred to as Jāti, i.e. simple “birth”, also referring to the process of being born or coming into the world in any way. The entire process of change from one life to the next is called Punabhava (Sanskrit) or Punabbhava (Pāli), literally “becoming again”, it is also known simple as Bhava, i.e. “becoming”. The process, seen from a universal perspective, encompassing all living beings, is called Saṃsāra.

Birth (Jāti) may be named “rebirth” and a number of alternate names are also available as given below:

“Cuti” “Yoni” “Paṭisandhi” “Okkamati” “Abhinibbatti” “Sañjāti”. The Visuddhimagga explains that:

“In the direct sense, however, it is the first manifestation of any aggregates that are manifested in living beings when they are born anywhere that is called birth.”

There are kinds of the birth of aggregates (Khandha):

1. Pañcavokārajāti: the birth of the Five Aggregates,
2. Catuvokārajāti: the birth of the Four Aggregates,
3. Ekavokārajāti: the birth of the only Form-Aggregate (Rūpa-khandha).

Birth is the rise of living beings in any of the thirty-one states consisting of the four stages: of loss and woe, of human beings, of gods and of Brahma. These are caused by Kamma-process, which are deeds done through body, speech and mind in the forms of wholesome, and unwholesome. According to the Buddha’s teaching:

“Deed divides a being that is to say by lowness and excellence.”

If we are of good conduct, the good leads us to happy states. If we are of bad conduct, the bad leads us to evil states, whereas, actions is the cause of birth. Birth is the cause of decay and death.

In the end, we come to the Buddhist concept of life. Besides this, the birth-process, value of life, aim of human life and path to the attainment of aim of human life according to Buddhism is important.

Although it is difficult to summarize the teachings of the Buddha who was mainly an ethical teacher and a mystic rather than a metaphysician and who preached only orally, yet a fairly good account of his teachings can be gleaned. It may be said to be threefold:

1. The Four Noble Truths,
2. The Noble Eight fold path,
3. Doctrine of Dependent Origination.
From a point of view of ethical mode, “Buddhism is not a system of metaphysics but rather a collection of facts discovered by the Buddha. His enlightenment is not a kind of mystic experience, but a gradual mode of action and conduct”

Life, as we have seen, is the cycle of birth and rebirth. It is full of sufferings. It begins due to ignorance and it may be ceased by gaining true and perfect knowledge. But now the question arises that, is this life so useless that we strive life long to get rid of it? No, it is not so. Life is very valuable and especially the life of a human being. Human birth is regarded as the superior existence in this world. According to Buddhism, even gods have to take birth as human being to attain Buddha hood, i.e., Nibbāna.

Buddhism considers the human birth as a matter of excellent fortune, for it is only human being who can develop himself and can attain the highest truth of life. Therefore, the Buddha said.

“It is very difficult to be born as human”.

The value of human life and human being rests in the development of human mind moving on to the highest level of Arahant. Buddhist ethics explains that the life of individual is valuable. If there is a question that what is the value of life, the Buddhist ethic’s answer is “moral”.

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