

Notes on
The Four Noble Truths



Presented by
U Myat Thein, Director (Retd:) B.S.I

Handwritten notes in Burmese script, including the number 20520 and other illegible characters.

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sabha danam dhamma danam jinati
The Gift of truth excels all other gifts

*Gotama Buddha's greatest desire was to make
available to all mankind
the universal principles of truth.*

*Buddhism was from the first a message
for all mankind and was from the first
a missionary nature.*

*Buddhist are bound to offer
all the knowledge of the path
leading to Nibbana.*

*Human rights being man's sole right,
to proclaim a teaching is however forbidden,
to proselytize in a sense of forcing ideas
upon an unwilling audience.*

*Some seeds, of course, will fall on stony ground,
but some will flourish abundantly.*

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(to make easier to understand fully)
Whole - heartedly & cordially granted*

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F o r e w o r d

This paper (if I may call it so) sheds some light on the life and teachings of "Lord Buddha" and it is truly worth reading. Except for a few Pali words which, I think, would delay the reader's comprehension of the subject matter, the whole paper is interesting as well as informative, especially to modern young people with limited knowledge of what the Buddha taught to humanity.

Throughout the text, it is quite evident that the author has put in untiring efforts not merely to reveal the practicability of the Great Mentor's counsel but also to urge all readers to endeavour to attain the highest possible goal, namely "Nirvana". Therefore, I strongly recommend that this paper be published as soon as possible for the benefit of people, irrespective of age culture or creed.

To sum up, it is my belief that this present paper will be of great benefit to people whose mother-tongue is not Myanmar and that it will, in no small measure, contribute towards propagating the light of Buddha Sasana throughout the entire world of ours.

U Aung Thein,
Staff Officer,
Internal Revenue Dept.,
Mynamar.

P r e f a c e

1. I was a man who never arouse or curious to take heed to study religion. A year or so before retirement from service my old time pal U Sein Lin, the then Director General Inland Revenue Department, sent me a copy of "Myat Buddha Dethana". If it not be the authograph of my beloved and respected Sayagyi, U Ko Lay (Zeyamaung), Retd; Vice Chancellor Mandalay University, I would have kept it aside, reading through casually obsessed me much that I can not help reading it over and over again.

2. Sayagyi is the pioneer of Mandalay University. He started it as University College Mandalay an affiliate of Yangon University, with teaching staff including some foreigners. He successfully organized some of his brilliant pupils to join him after graduation, and later on replaced the foreigners. He strove hard with the help of teachers and students until a separate University was achieved. Me and my wife were his pupils. I being a hosteler frequented much that he is still addressing me as "John Toke" my inherit-ed colonial school name.

3. My desire was to contribute my service to Sayagyi. Although that desire put me on my mettle luck is unfavourable in my College life. As time passed without acheving any, Sayagyi insisted me to join the "Air Force" instead of wasting time and got me enroled as Cadet Pilot. As luck set his face against me again, I resigned and turned once again in the education field. Though I strained every nerve, success turned his head on the very verge of completion in Yangon University. While I was out at sea and at my wits end Sayagyi's advice came in the nick of time, that I could apply to be selected as public service before age limit. Sayagyi helped me out so that I became an official in the BSI.

4. With the intention of improving myself, ensuing the motto of BSI "Veracity in honourables, pledge in man" as is stands, my life gradually transformed, won the approval of superiors and was successful through out my careea of 36 years. Flanking with copatriots in defending the dangers of attempting disintigration, served our country, taking responsibility as Director for a long interval of

successful 12 years and honourably retired at the ripe age of sixty.

5. There are many to mention about Sayagyi's benevolences towards his pupils which made them possible for their success and had driven many to follow the right path by admonishing them. Whenever we (gathering of old students) paid him respect apart from giving the usual advice to be well-being, he admonished us in a precise, clear, simple and easy words to apprehend Buddhist teachings. Wishing to express our gratitude, I would like to drop a few lines more about him.

(A) Sayagyi realized that the religious studies he made nonchalantly in his childhood was quite obscure only when the Sixth Buddhist Council (1953-55) convened in Myanmar. He rebegan his studies casually at first and steadfastly when he retired from service. In April 1960 he took refuge in the Most Venerable "Waibu Sayadaw" at Ingingpin Tawya Monastery in Yay Oo Township, Sagaing Division, where he was ordained as "donlabayahan" (a hard to obtain medicant monk) by sayadaw himself, where he strove hard for ten days to have proper meditation experience. Sayadaw could coach him only the first few steps of Anapana Satipathan Bhāvanā (a method of mindfulness on respiration) for three days only and left for Yangon to pay his seventh regular yearly visit at the International Meditation Centre (IMC) leaving two aged and efficient Sanghas to guide Sayagyi in his meditation.

(B) In insuing more technique on meditation, helped by Sayagyi U Chit Tin and Sayamagyi Daw Mya Thwin of IMC, meditation coaches if I may call them so, Sayagyi became one of the disciples of the Honorary U Ba Khin, the founder of IMC and the one who strenuously contributed all his endeavours to be blessed with efficacious personals to propagate Buddha Sassana. Having special privilege to stay in IMC and meditate at his disposal Sayagyi made the best of the available opportunity, zealously meditated over three months at a stretch, starting 22nd December 1960, till the last week of March 1961, apart from the regular 10 days courses. In June 1965, Sayagyi

had the chance again to take refuge in the most venerable Waibu Sayadaw. At that time it was together with Sayagyi U Ba Khin, whence at Ingingpin Tawya Monastery, both were ordained for 12 days by Sayadaw given the Yahan names as Shin Kusala to Sayagyi U Ba Khin and Shin Tay Zeinda to Sayagyi U Ko Lay.

- (C) Being a literateur, having thoughts, feelings and confidence, instead of giving the authority to conduct meditation courses Sayagyi U Ba Khin gave Sayagyi U Ko Lay the task to make creative writings on religion by giving suggestions, facts and collections of all the informations and evidential documents of emulative personalities. "Myat Buddha Dethana" is Sayagyi U Ko Lay's first accomplishment in complying the tasks entrusted by Sayagyi U Ba Khin. Sayagyi had done and continuously doing more of what Sayagyi U Ba Khin had entrusted.
- (D) The two towering State Pariyatti Sasana Universities in Yangon and Mandalay are the body structures of one of the four main resolutions passed on Parayatti by the all sects of schools of Sangha's General meeting. To accomplish this resolution the State Saṅgha's Council formed a Project Commette where intellectuals gave services with their abilities in respective sectors. Sayagyi aided enthusiastically in the education field with all his experiences.
- (E) The two Universities are educating the insuing Saṅghas by the three main departments of Vineya, Sutta and Abhidhamma, and four departments of supporting subjects. So far there are Saṅghas preparing for Sasana Sakasila Dhamma Cariya (equivalent to BA) and those who won that degree are preparing for Mahā Sasana Sakasila Dhamma Cariya (equivalent to MA). There are also some Saṅghas qualified before hand prepared and won Mahā Sasana Sakasila Dhamma Cariya. Sayagyi is taking responsibility of one of the departments of supporting subjects and is undertaking a full time lectures.
- (F) Sayagyi is also taking the responsibility of

translating into English the 6 volumes in 8 books of Buddha Wun (The Life of Buddha), the orthograph of late, Tipitakadara Dhamma Bandagarika, Agga Mahā Pandita, Abhidaza Maharatha Guru, Ashin Wi Seitta Tharabhiwunta, Mingun Sayadaw. To speeden the works Mingun Sayadaw, before his demise presented a set of computer to Sayagyi in 1992.

- (G) Sayagyi and his spouse Daw Than Khin (Retd) Teacher, disposed all there immovable belongings and donated the sales proceeds in full, towards the two Sasana Universities.
- (H) The main organization of the protecting body of Tipitaka, constructed a fashionable modeled cottage on the site of Kaba Aye, Hanthathiri hillock which is within the Yangon Sasana University campus. Naming it as "Zeya Shwe Mye Guest Professor's Villa", donated for Sayagyi and Ma Ma Khin to use as accomodation for their life time.
- (I) Sayagyi has collections of sacret scriptures and literary works in Myanmar as well as in English which he is offering the insuing final year and above Saṅghas to refer in their studies. The same organization erected a new one story building within the compound of Sayagyi's Villa for Sayagyi to use as his library and translation works office. 20th August 1993 being the Sayagyi's 80th Birthday, 30th day of his retirement from service and their couples' golden anniversary, The president of the organization Dr. Tha Hla magnificiently naming the building as "Zeya Maung Librarry", donated to Sayagyi on that auspicious day by performing religious rights.
- (Apart from a set of Encyclopaedia Britannica, all Sayagyi's Collections of Secred Books in English as well as Pali and Myanmar and all literary works have been donated towards Pariyāṭi Saṅgha's University. That set of Encyclopaedia Sayagyi had kept aside to donate towards Internationed Buddhist Academy which will be open by Thidagu Saya daw the Mahā Dhamma Katika, Bahu Zana Hita, Badanta, Nanissara. As that Acadamy will be open in near futher. it is learnt that it

has been donated very recently and that U Shwe Ne, the Sayadaw's chores who is performing Sayadaws sundry matters in Yangon is arranging to dispectch those to Saging where International Buddhist Acadamy is going to establish.

(J) The ethereal harmony Sayagyi and Ma Ma Khin had traversed happily hand-in-hand their explicable fifty years, tempering their golden year to be refined to purity, Sayagyi while earnest with his lecturings and translation works lives with his ever loving spouse Ma Ma Khin encouraging and assisting by his side in Zeya Shwe Mye Guest Professor's Villa, tenderly learning each other heavily even more than ever in their mellow eighties.

6. "Myat Buddha Dethana" is the translation of "What The Buddha Taught" by Venerable Thera, Agga Maha Pandita Doctor Walpola Rahula of Sri Lanka. Sayagyi could have translated easily but never does things flippantly. To be in unison with Buddhism, to be legible, to be authentic in understandable simple words and more over to express perfectly as what is in the origin, it took him considerable time and energy. Even a man like me with a very limited educational qualification and zero in religious knowledge could grasp some basic principles of Buddhism and some idea of The Four Noble Truths by running through once.

7. The two books engulfed my odd attitude and a new desire to study more of religion came in. Regarding the study of religion Sayagyi once said "In studying religion deterioriated scripts may spontaneously veer to deveation. Having his warnning in mind I dare not touch the readily available legible ones. With my meagre educational qualification, sacred scriptures and literary works are also beyond my reach. I was helpless saved only by relying those two books, reading carefully over and over in my private hours and leasurely making notes either in Myanmar or in English of what ever religious knowledge came to me anew.

8. Out of my four daughters and three sons, the fourth and the sixth daughters who are at present in a distant land knew what I have been meddelling with, wrote to me to complete my notes, both in Myanmar and English and to send

them copies so that they may understand Truth, and to reveal their friends there, with expressive wordings in their religious discussions. They even named my scribblings as "The Notes on The Four Noble Truths". I at once knew that my lovable young daughters are cleverly instigating me to make myself thorough and to step on to the path leading to Nibbana.

9. In Buddhist theology, only human being can achieve Nibbana. To be born as a human being is one of the five Buddhist ideals of hard to achieve. Though fortunate enough to be born as a human being, most of them veered the other way than taking the path to Nabbāna. I can not find words to express how happy I am to have clever daughters in such an era, wishing to seek Truth.

10. Giving the title my smattering notes as "The Notes on The Four Noble Truths" is too much for me. To write notes on such a profound, seriously considered, and highly esteemed subject, in English as well as in Myanmar, need a considerable knowledge and linguistic qualification, for which I have none. I felt disheartened and dismayed that I will not be a reliable and a dutiful father to my two daughters, as I ever was to my children.

11. Fortunate enough, a true friend of mine Sadhama Zotika Daja, U Kyaw Khin Myint sent me two books as Dhamma Dhana. The books in addition to my two favourite books, all being written in conformity with the sacred scriptures by learned and experienced persons and the contents being discussed impartially, the essence of Buddhism, those books encouraged me to complete my notes for my two daughters. So as to adorn my notes with what my daughters need, there are ample of wordings, usages, and sentences to borrow; quotations, examples and illustrations to copy.

12. The two books are;-one is the compilations of papers read at the 2nd International Seminar on Vipassana Bhāvanā hold in the year 1992, at Dhamma Giri, an outskirt of Igatpuri, Nasic Distric, India, the Vipassana Institute established by Goenkaji in 1976, and the other one is "The Art Of Living" by William Hart, written as taught by Goenkaji.

13. Relying on the contents of the books in possession and Sayagyi's given explanations on my queries on some

confusing and puzzling facts, I was able to complete my notes in English to feed my daughters' need. Knowing what I was up to, Sayagyi sent for me and my wife and said "Reading and writing will not be beneficial without practical experience". So saying he sent both of us to attend one of the three (10) days Vipassana Bhavana Course where Goenkaji came personally and conducted for the first time in Yangon. [Goenkaji had established 24 Vipassana Bhavana Centres in 18 countries and the 25th is the one in Nga Htat Gyi Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon, ph;39290, established as Dhamma Zawti Vipassana centre on 7th October 1993].

14. In 10 days course, all meditators (Yogis) are made to abide by the rules laid down making severance of all relations and to remain Noble Silence throughout the course. Goenkaji conducted to put all the participants (Yogis) on to the Mega path, the fourth of The Noble Truths. Mega path being split into three sectors; Sila, Samādhi and Paññā. He taught to take up step by step as follows;-

- (A) At the very beginning every participant was asked to observe Sila, i.e., to abide by the basic code of morality, making aware of its importance and then started teaching to practice showing step by step of gaining concentration Samādhi and then ways and means of acquire Paññā.
- (B) The advancing steps to be taken were introduced anew each and everyday, with lucid explanations, distinctly repeated progressively that Yogis may comply through understanding.
- (C) By the end of a day, the daily task was ended by an hour of his discourse. Though there were some sense of humour included in his discourses those were never erroneous or irrelevant to the effectiveness of the performed daily task.
- (D) All his daily discourses, explained and clarified the vacillating manners aroused by the Yogis on their daily task.
- (E) On the tenth day Noble Silence ended. Yogis were allowed to discuss each other and was given the opportunity to seek explanations from Goenkaji

on any bewildering facts on his teaching.

(F) After discussions made among each other and after interviewing with Goenkaji, the task of the tenth day came to an end by a discourse explaining Metta Bhavana (extending unlimited love and good-will to all beings) by Goenkaji and observing it together with him.

The 10 days course concluded on the morning of eleventh day after an hour of Group meditation and listening to Goenkaji's words of instructions to continue meditation till success.

15. There is no saviour, no salvation in Buddhism. There are only teachers to show the right path. Both purity and defilement depend on oneself. By the end of the 10 days course, Goenkaji revealed the entire technique in outline so that the Yogis to continue the practices in achieving Panna and to bear in mind some important facts. A logical progression from the first step to the final goal remain on the participant own accord. Owing to the past and present meritorious and demeritorious deeds, some may reach the goal within the 10 days course, some may need to exert more.

16. After attending the course I became quite confident. To be wise, I tried and completed my notes in English which is easier for me by referring the books mentioned and then into Myanmar appropriately as far as I can, so that my daughters may grasp easier by reading comparatively. I am happy again to be a reliable and dutiful father to my daughters as I ever was.

17. After sending my notes to my two loving daughters, a wish came to me to distribute my notes as Dhamma Dana. Once Sayagi metaphorically using a bucket as one's capability, and water as knowledge said analogically, "One should not fidget before the bucket is full, the water in it will spilt to nothing; if it is full to the brim, the contents will automatically overflow". Remembering his advice I felt frustrated on my capability and was reluctant and hesitant to do so. My remaining children and many of their intimate friends, encouraged much that I sounded the matter to Sayagi. So happy I was to read satisfaction in Sayagi's face that I can submit this my humble notes as Dhamma Dana dareingly.

"Vipassana and Vedana understood by a Novice" read at the above mentioned second international seminar.

(C) Sayagyi U Bo Thin, Rector (Retd), Institute of Education for scrutinizing my Myanmar version and 1990 literary award winner U Ba Than, B.A, M.A. (Dev:Econ) Willians, USA, Director General (Retd), Department of The Puplic Service Affaris for scrutinizing my English version, and to both of them for taking the trouble giving me innumerable suggestions to be well endowed in my paper,

and to many who helped me so generously that all of them enjoy the merit of this donation and that they be released from all sufferings.

4. Though I have not the previlege to be at the visinity of Agga Mahā Pandita Walpola Rahula and Thedagu Sayadaw Mahā Dhamma Katika Bahu Zana Hata Dara Ashin Badanta Nanissara to revere and acquire knowledge, however I am greatful to both the Sayadaws for having the chance to borrow freely some wordings, usages, facts and even entire sentences, quotations, examples and illustrations from Sayadaw Walpola Rahula's "What The Buddha Taught" and Sayadaw Nanissara's paper "The Buddha and His Noble Path" read at 2nd International Seminar on Vipassana Bhavana. In gratification I do hereby solomnly made devotional offering to both Sayadaws by the merit of this donation.

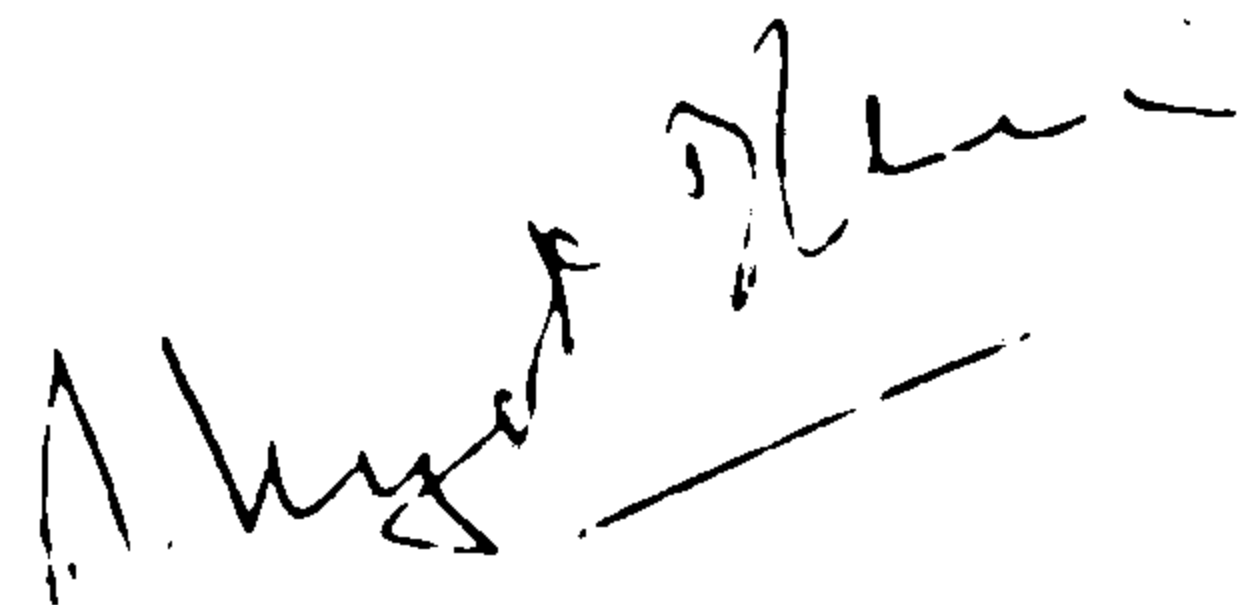
5. Me and my wife had our first experience of Vipassana Bhavana only when Mahā Sadhamma Jotika Daza Shri S. N. Goenka conducted a temporary three (10) days course for the first time in Yangon. His systematically given technique of observing Vipassana Bhavana and his unlimited love and good-will extended towards all, effectively fulfilled our desire. Striving for advancement as he wished, the knowledge obtained by listenting carefully his elebarately given discourses and studying what Willian Hart worte of all Goenkaji's discourses in The Art of Living, I became capable to make this Dhamma Dana. In gratification for all his Benevolence I asure that me and my wife are complying exactly his instructions and that I pay all my due respect to Goenkaji by offering this Dhamma Dana.

6. I am deeply greatful to my most beloved and respected couple Sayagyi U Ko Lay and his spouse Sayamagyi Daw

Than Khin (Ma Ma Khin) the ethereal harmony for consistently giving me and my wife their kind parental advices and admonishments. I am indebted much for their kindness that I can humbly give in return to both of them the merit of this Dhamma Dana as an act of obeisance.

7. Finally I am forever grateful to my ever devoted loving wife Daw Kyin Kyin Hla for her magnificent support, by giving me her ideas and views she sought by reading the books I relied on and her findings she obtained by experiencing the technique of observing Vipassana Bhavana taught by Goenkaji. For her act of kindness I wish that she may reach her aiming goal in shortest interval.

8. Though the accomplishment of this Dhamma Dana belong to the collation of all those who helped me and may seem that I have the approval from them. The ideas and views are entirely my own and what ever defect exist are my own responsibility.



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T h e G o t a m a B u d d h a

1. The Gotama Buddha whose personal name was Siddhattha and whose family name was Gotama was the son of King Sudhodana and Queen Maha Maya, the ruler of the kingdom of Sakya (modern Nepal).

2. He was born on Friday the Full moon day of Kason (May) 624 B.C., at Lumbani. At His birth He was foretold by the court astrologers that he would become the universal monarch or the greatest religious teacher in the world (the Buddha).

3. Human as He was, at the age of sixteen He got married to a beautiful and devoted young princess Yasodhara Devi, daughter of King Suppabuddha the ruler of Devadaha and had an only son Rahula. Though he was brought up in the lap of Royal luxuries, He acquired earnestly what He need to learn. Receiving an education befitting a prince He assumed kingship when His father abdicated in His favour. He lived with pomp and worldly pleasures of Royal Household in His palace with ample amusement and every luxury at His command.

4. As the fulfilment of His ten paramis (perfection for Buddhahood) undertaken throughout his continuous lives was about to be ripened, He saw on four separate occasions the Four Omens which are the sick, the aged, the dead, and the holy ascetic. Living amidst comfort and prosperity, He knew no woe and never experienced or confronted with sorrow. After seeing the Four Omens He realized the universality of sorrows and miseries, which were embodied in the Four Omens.

5. His contemplative nature and boundless compassion stirred a deep pity for sorrowing humanity and all living beings, felt a deepest desire to find the way to save them from universal sufferings. Realizing the vanity of sensual enjoyments and finding that the fleeting material pleasures of Royal Household and worldly amusements were no longer a congenial place for Him. He renounced the Throne at the age of twenty-nine. It was an unprecedented historic event, for He renounced not in old age as all other kings usually did, but in His prime of manhood.

6. As it was the belief in the ancient days that no deliverance could be gained unless one leads a holy life

of strict asceticism, He donned himself with a humble robe of a recluse (a scarlet coloured robe offered respectfully by the Brahamas to wear as "yahan" Buddhist monk), set forth wandering about the valley of the Gangese river in search of Truth and Peace. He studied and followed the systems and methods of the prevailing traditional religious teachings, including the instructions of the foremost sages of the time, Alara Kalama and Udaka Ramaputta. He soon mastered all that was to be learnt from the teachings.

7. Realizing that the result of the practices were not the knowledge he was seeking, He abandoned all those teachings. Determining to achieve success by his own unaided effort, and believing that leading the life of austerity (practicing self-mortification) would win the truth, He sat forth subjecting Himself strenuously to rigorous practices and all form of severe austerities, vigil after vigil, penance after penance for six tedious long years. The painful practices proved absolutely futile. The utter futility of self-mortification only weakened His body, resulted in lassitude of spirit and was reduced to a skeleton without achieving anything.

8. Benefited by the invaluable experiences, He finally realized that self-indulgence retards one's spiritual progress and self-mortification weakens one's intellect and that those were not conducive to his objectives. He decided to avoid the two extremes and followed an independent course. At last He discovered the "middle course" or the "middle way" or the "middle path" (majjhimapatipata) a way of meditation or the practice of concentration, which subsequently became one of the salient characteristics of His teachings, Buddhism.

9. One happy morning, which was on Wednesday the Full Moon day of Kaso (May) 589 B.C, at the ripe age of thirty five, sitting under the spreading banyan tree on the bank of the Naranjara river at Buddha Gaya(modern Bihar), while absorbed in the deep meditation or deepest practice of concentration, unaided, unguided and solely relying on his own efforts and wisdom, eradicated all defilements, purified himself, realizing things as they truly are, achieving the Truth, vanquished the Maha Boddhi Tree (the tree of wisdom) and the "aparajita" golden throne. He thus attained Enlightenment (Buddhahood) and was known as Supreme Buddha, The Gotama Buddha, The Fully Enlightened One.

10. In the chronicles. Gotama Buddha became the fourth

Buddha. The previously enlightened Buddhas were **Kokusandha Buddha**, **Konāgamanan Buddha** and **Kassapa Buddha**. **Gotama Buddha** later prophesied that the next Buddha will be **Arimitteya**.

11. **Gotama Buddha** delivered His First sermon to "pañcavaggiya" the five ascetics, His old colleagues the Ashin Aññāsikondañña, the Ashin Vappa, the Ashin Baddhaya, the Ashin Mahanāma, the Ashin Assaji, in the deer park at Isipatana (modern Sarnath), near Banares (Baranasi).

12. Since that day for forty five years, having a great compassion towards humanity and all living beings, and having the desire to save the sorrowing humanity, extended His kindness and good will, preached with the perfect embodiment of all His own striven virtues, to all classes of men and women, irrespective of caste or social distinction.

13. All the sermons embodied therein were expounded to suit the temperaments of various persons, and directed at a certain individual to serve a purpose and to achieve its objectives. Dominated by no personal motive, **Gotama Buddha** served humanity both by example and precept.

14. **Gotama Buddha** never laid stress to fall into the error of thinking Him to be an immortal being. Neither is He an incarnation of Hindu God as believed by some, nor is He a saviour. To do good or to refrain from evil, neither hope of reward, nor fear of punishment, act as an incentive, He emphasized only the importance of self reliance and individual striving. He does not claim the monopoly of Buddhahood. Raising the worth of mankind, encouraging and inducing all to do as well as or better than Him, saying that all mankind are potential Buddhas, and without the closed-fist of the teacher **Gotama Buddha** revealed the straight path that leads there-to.

15. After a very successful ministry of forty-five years **Gotama Buddha** like every other human being, succumbed to the inexorable law of change "**parinibbuto**" on Tuesday the full Moon day of Kason (May) 544 B.C., at the ripe age of eighty at Kusinara (in Utar Pradesh).

16. The All Merciful **Gotama Buddha** has passed away but His teachings the "**dhamma**", He unreservedly bequeathed to humanity, popularly known as Buddhism, is ever fresh and its pristine purity has flourishes and spread till now.

The Ten Pāramīs (Perfection)

Gotama Buddha the Enlightened One, before attaining the Omniscience of a Buddha, being no other than a human being, had been caught in a vicious circle of the "samsaric circus", along the constant succession of birth and death. But the Mighty One with the full determination of becoming a Buddha, pledged to help all beings, observed to be competently endowed with the qualities to help others, gradually fulfilled the needs of others (fulfilled his ten paramis) throughout his preceding existences till He succeeded his aim.

The Ten Paramis (perfections) He observed and fulfilled are;

- (1) **Dāna Pāramī (generosity)**
To be generous and helpful.
- (2) **Sila pāramī (morality)**
To be well-disciplined and refined in manners, pure in thoughts, words and deeds, and be pure and clean in all dealings.
- (3) **Nekkhamma Pāramī (renunciation)**
Not to be selfish, and self-possessive but selfless and disinterested and be able to sacrifice all pleasures.
- (4) **Paññā Pāramī (wisdom)**
To be wise and able to see the truth and see things as they truly are, so as to be able to give all the benefits of knowledge and enlighten others.
- (5) **Viriya Pāramī (energetic)**
To be fearless in facing dangers, courageously surmounting all obstacles with energetic vigour and perseverance, to be able to serve others to the best of his ability, and strive diligently until the goal is achieved.
- (6) **Khanti Pāramī (patience)**
To ever be patient, and to be able to bear and forbear the wrongs of others, and ever be tolerant and see the good and beauty in all.
- (7) **Sacca Pāramī (truthfulness)**
Never to be swerved from the path of truth, and be truthful and honest not hiding the truth for the sake of being polite.
- (8) **Adhitthāna Pāramī (determination)**
To be soft as a flower and firm as a rock, ever be highly principled, firm and resolute, and have an iron will.

(9) **Mettā Pāramī (loving-kindness)**

To be ever kind, friendly, compassionate towards all, and be able to regard all as immediate kinsmen.

(10) **Upekkhā Pāramī (equanimity)**

To be ever calm, serene, unruffled, peaceful, gaining a balance of mind and have perfect equanimity.

PROMINENT CHARACTERISTICS OF BUDDHISM

1. **Siddhattha Gotama**, with full determination to find the way out of universal sufferings, attributed all his realizations, attainments, and achievements to human intelligence finally attained Enlightenment (became Buddha) and was known as Gotama Buddha.

2. The teachings He expounded for 45 years during his life-time after attaining Buddhahood as Gotama Buddha are;- non aggressive, demands no blind faith, expound no dogmatic creed, encourages no superstitious rites, but guides a disciple to gain supreme wisdom and deliverance from all evil by pure living, thinking and practicing. His teachings are collectively termed in Pali as "Dhamma" and is popularly known as Buddhism.

3. It is known that the doctrines and sermons unreservedly bequeathed by the all merciful Gotama Buddha were numerous, amount to eighty-four thousand in number. Those doctrines and sermons delivered on various occasions are known as "dhammakhandha eighty-four thousand".

4. Although Gotama Buddha left no written records of his teachings, a most distinguished disciple Venerable Ananda Thera who served Gotama Buddha closely for twenty-four years and who enjoyed the special privilege of hearing again all of Gotama Buddha's discourses preserved all the teachings by committing to memory. In the same way Venerable Upali Thera who was versed in the subject of "Vinaya" i.e., the rules and regulations for the future disciples of the celibate order set up by Gotama Buddha Himself for the development and perpetuity of Buddha Sāsana (the dispensation) preserved all the subjects of "Vinaya".

5. Immediately after Gotama Buddha's demise *prinibbuto* (500) of his disciples, the enlightened ones (Arahats), who had destroyed all passions and who were all versed in Gotama Buddha's teachings, held a convocation headed by the most aged Venerable Mahā Kasapa, to rehearse all the doctrines as was originally taught by Gotama Buddha. Buddha's teachings *dhammakhandhas* were split into three groups subject-wise, viz: "Vinaya pitaka" the discipline, "Sutta pitaka" the discourses, and "Abhidhamma pitaka" the ultimate doctrines.

6. During the convocation period in rehearsing the Gotama Buddha's discourses, in answer to the questions raised by the chief arahats The Venerable Upali Thera

recited in detail, the teachings of Gotama Buddha on the subjects of Vinaya and The Venerable Ananda Thera recited the Gotama Buddha's sermons and doctrines on the subjects of Sutta (the discourses) and Abhidhamma the ultimate doctrines.

7. Thus the three Piṭakas were formulated and compiled, as "tipitaka" arranged as in its present form by those Arahats of old. As the word itself implies, "tipitaka" is known as "Three Baskets". From the day the "tipitaka" was formed Saṅghas (inheritors of Buddha Sasana) preserved by committing to memory and transmitting mouth-to-mouth among Saṅghas and conveyed those contents orally generation to generation. Only in the year 83 B.C., the "tipitaka" is committed to writing on ola leaves in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka).

8. The concise notes on the doctrines and sermons in each of the so called Three Baskets of the voluminous "tipitaka" are:-

(A) The "Vinaya Piṭika"

In this "piṭaka", gradual development of Buddha Sassana (dispensation) is described in detail, and an account of the life and ministry of Gotama Buddha is given; some important and interesting information about ancient history, customs, science, arts etc: are revealed. On the whole it mainly deals with rules and regulations on which Gotama Buddha promulgated for the disciplining of the celibate order including nuns (Bhikkhunis). This piṭake consists of five books viz:-

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| (1) "Pārājika" - major offences | } "vibhanga" |
| (2) "Pacittiya" - minor offences | |
| (3) "Mahāvagga" - greater section | } "khandhaka" |
| (4) "Cullavagga" - shorter section | |
| (5) "Parivara" - epitom of the "Vinaya" | |

(B) The "sutta piṭaka"

This "Piṭaka" consists mainly of discourses delivered by Gotama Buddha and a few discourses delivered by His disciples such as Venerable Sāriputta Thera, Venerable Ananda Thera, Venerable Moggallāna etc: The sermon and discourses included in it were expounded as occasion arises and opportunely uttered to suit the temperament of various persons and to suit a particular purpose. Most of the sermons were intended mainly for the benefit of the future disciples of the celibate order the Saṅghas (including bhikkhunis) who will inher-

it and maintain the ~~Buddha Sāsana~~. There are several other discourses which deal with the material and moral progress for the purity of his lay followers. There are also simple but illuminating discourses, conventional teachings (vohara dassana) included. This "Pitāka" is split into five main books viz:-

- (1) **Dīgha Nikāya** (collection of long discourses)
 - (a) Sutta Silakkhandha Pali.
 - (b) Sutta Patheyya Pali.
 - (c) Sutta Mahawa Pali.
- (2) **Majjhima Nikāya** (collection of middle length stories)
 - (a) Mūla paṇṇāsa
 - (b) Majjhima paṇṇāsa
 - (c) Upari paṇṇāsa
- (3) **Samyutta Nikāya** (collection of kindred sayings)
 - (a) Sagahta Vagga Samyutta
 - (b) Nidana Vagga Samyutta
 - (c) Khanda Vagga Samyutta
 - (d) Salāyatana Vagga Samyutta
 - (e) Mahā Vagga Samyutta
- (4) **Anguttara Nikāya** (collection of discourse arranged in accordance with numbers)
 - (a) Eka Nipāta Vagga
 - (b) Duka Nipāta Vagga
 - (c) Tika Nipāta Vagga
 - (d) Catuka Nipāta Vagga
 - (e) Pañcaka Nipāta Vagga
 - (f) Chattaka Nipāta Vagga
 - (g) Sattaka Nipāta Vagga
 - (h) Atthaka Nipāta Vagga
 - (i) Navaka Nipāta Vagga
 - (j) Dasaka Nipāta Vagga
 - (k) Ekadataka Nipāta Vagga
- (5) **Khuddaka Nikāya** (smaller collections)
 - (a) Khuddaka Pāṭha (Shortest Texts)
 - (b) Dhammapada (Way of truth)
 - (c) Udāna (Paeans of Joy)
 - (d) Iti Vuttaka ("thus said" discourses)
 - (e) Sutta Nipata (Collected discourses)
 - (f) Vimāna Vutthu (Stories of celestial mansions)
 - (g) Peta Vutthu (Stories of petas)
 - (h) Thera-gāthā (Psalms of brethren)
 - (i) Theri-gāthā (Psalms of sisters)
 - (j) Jātaka (Birth stories)
 - (k) Niddesa (Expositions)
 - (l) Patīsambhida (Analytical knowledge)

(m) Apadana	(Lives of Arahats)
(n) Buddhavaṃsa	(The history of the Buddha)
(o) Cariya Piṭaka	(Modes of conduct)

(C) The "Abhidhamma Piṭaka"

It is the most important and interesting of the three. For the wise it is an indispensable guide. The conventional teachings (vohara dassana) shown in the "Sutta Piṭaka" is propounded and shown as ultimate teachings in this piṭaka. In it consciousness is defined, and set forth in detail, thoughts are analyzed and minutely described, mental states are enumerated, matter is summarily discussed, units of matter, properties of matter, relationship between mind and matter is explained. Abhidhamma explains that so-called beings are composed of the two factors mind and matter, helps the understanding of things as they truly are, and evolve an ethical system leading to the realization of ultimate goal-> Nibbāna. This "Piṭaka" consists of seven books as follows;

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| (1) Dhamma Saṅgaṇī | (Classification of Dhamma) |
| (2) Vibhanga | (The book of divisions) |
| (3) Katha Vatthu | (Points of controversy) |
| (4) Puggala Paṇatti | (Description of Individuals) |
| (5) Dhatu Katha | (Discussion with reference to elements) |
| (6) Yamaka | (The book of pairs) |
| (7) Paṭṭhāna | (The book of relations) |

Is Buddhism a philosophy?

9. "Dhamma" the teachings of Gotama Buddha are enshrined in the above mentioned sacred books the "tipiṭaka". All of Gotama Buddha's teachings deal with truths and facts, and are not concerned with theories and philosophies.

10. Philosophy is the subject, dealing with the knowledge and the love of inducing search after wisdom. It is the findings of the work, enthusiastically done and revealed by the wise (scientists, psychologists, philosophers and such experts). Human curiosity is the natural desire, wanting to know about the problems of life, or about the things in the environs. The wise, to quench the thirst or to feed the urge, studied the nature and the principles underlying the problems by comparing, contrasting, exami-

ning thoroughly, and the views and results of their experiments were revealed by deducing as theories, philosophies, natural laws etc.

11. There are many astounding theories and philosophies ventured by the ingenious inventors, sustaining as profound truths. Theories and philosophies being worked out on hypothesis and deduced by assumptions, presumptions, and assertions to ascertain, very many of those accepted as profound truths turn out to be noughts after some time. Till recently, the scientists belief in the indivisibility and indestructibility of an atom, has been reduced to a series of events by the scientist themselves. The neutron, proton and electron which composes an atom can meet and annihilate one another. Matter also has disintegrated and is no longer solid nor enduring.

12. Gotama Buddha the Enlightened One developed Abhiññā the five super normal powers;

- (A) the divine eye "Dibbacakkhu"
- (B) the divine ear "Dibbasota"
- (C) the reminiscence of past births "Pubenivasanusatī nana"
- (D) the thought reading "Paracitta Vijānana"
- (E) the psychic power "Iddhivida".

13. Gotama Buddha possessing Abhinna knew everything but did not preach all that He knew. He taught what He deemed was absolutely essential; explaining to understand things as they truly are, what is within and what is without; so far as it concerns one's purification and one's emancipation; and ultimately expounded a path of deliverance. He was characteristically silent on questions irrelevant to His Noble Mission. Irrelevant problems that beset mankind are deliberately set aside.

14. In explaining a path of deliverance, i.e., the ways and means of eradicating universal sorrows, Gotama Buddha explained in four stages, Firstly He gave the definition of sufferings and explained in detail what suffering is, Secondly the cause of sufferings, and Thirdly the annihilation of sufferings were explained. Finally in the fourth stage, He explained the ways and means or the path leading to annihilation of sufferings.

15. The four stages explained are the foundations of Buddhism. The first three were explained philosophically and the fourth subsequently became the ethics of Buddhism based on those philosophical explanations of the first three. There are many salient features among Gotama

Buddha's discourses, such as: Law of Moral Causation, Law of Cause and Effect, Doctrine of Karma, explained philosophically as above, so that some named Buddhism as Buddhist Philosophy.

16. Philosophy as explained earlier is the created ingenious invention of an exceptional minded his views and assumptions deduced and worked out as philosophical theories, whereas "Dhamma" Gotama Buddha's teachings are not created or invented ones. Whether Gotama Buddha arises or not "Dhamma" exists, the only thing is that, it had lain hidden in the dark abyss of time from the ignorant eyes of men till Gotama Buddha compassionately revealed it to the world.

17. Philosophy deals mainly with knowledge and is not concerned with practice, whereas "Dhamma" is taught not merely as knowledge. Without practice one cannot appreciate the truth. It is to be studied, more to be practised, and above all to be realized. Realization of "Dhamma" is the ultimate Goal.

18. Therefore the question "Is Buddhism a philosophy?" can be answered in the strictest sense that it is not a philosophy. Dhamma the essence of Buddhism is more comprehensive than a mere Philosophy. If it is to be called a Philosophy it can only be termed Philosophy of Philosophies.

Is Buddhism a Religion?

19. Religion commonly understood, is a system of faith and worship, owing allegiance to a supernatural being. Buddhism does not demand blind faith, mere belief is dethroned and is substituted by confidence based on knowledge which is "saddhā". The starting point of Buddhism is reasoning or understanding "sammā ditṭhi"

20. One might argue that there is worshipping of images in Buddhism. Images and Bo-tree are the symbol of enlightenment. Offering flowers and incense to such symbol is only paying reverence to what it represents, determining to follow Gotama Buddha's teachings. In doing so he designedly makes himself feel that he is in the presence of the living Buddha, thereby gaining inspiration from his noble personality and breathes deep in his boundless compassion. (As for intellects who could easily focus their attention and visualize Gotama Buddha the external objects may not be necessary).

21. There are no petitional prayers in **Buddhism**. Prayers take the character of private communication with God, which is the selfish bargaining with God. Buddhists do not worship expecting favours. However much we pray, **Gotama Buddha** does not grant favours. For our own good and out of gratitude we pay respect or reverence to the sacred images.

22. What **Gotama Buddha** expected is, not so much obeisance as the actual observance of His teachings. Buddhist should not pray to be saved. Instead of prayers there is meditation, a method which one should rely on himself by practicing, that will lead to self-control, purification and realize Nibbana. **Gotama Buddha** said "He honours Me best, who practises My teachings best. He who sees Dhamma sees Me".

23. A **Buddhist** is not subservient to any higher supernatural power which controls his destiny. In Buddhism there is no God to be obeyed and feared. Buddhism recognizes the infinite latent possibilities of man and teaches that man can gain deliverance from sufferings by his own effort.

24. From all the reasons mentioned above, Buddhism can not strictly be called a religion. If it be called a religion it is:-

- (A) a teaching which takes a view of life that is more than superficial.
- (B) a teaching which looks into life and not merely at it.
- (C) a teaching which furnishes men with a guide to conduct that is in accord with its introspection.
- (D) a teaching which enables man to face life with fortitude and death with serenity.
- (E) a teaching of a system to get rid of all the ills of life.

Is Gotama Buddha a Saviour?

25. In Buddhism there is no Almighty God and there are no divine revelations or divine messengers. A Buddhist is not subservient to any which controls his destiny. As **Gotama Buddha** gave knowledge that one could neither purify nor defile another, a Buddhist does not seek refuge in Him with the hope that he will be saved by His personal purification. **Gotama Buddha** gave no such guarantee.

26. **Gotama Buddha** is no other than a Human being, claimed no inspiration from any God or external power and is neither God nor God's incarnation. It is quite clear that **Gotama Buddha** is not a saviour, it can only be called in a sense that he perceiving the Universal sorrows, worked hard to find the means of deliverance and compassionately revealed the world, the truth lain hidden from the ignorant eyes of men.

What is Buddhism all about?

What are its aims and objects?

27. Freedom of thought is necessary in religious studies, for man's emancipation from universal sufferings depends on his own realization of Truth and not on the benevolent grace of a God or external power as a reward for his obedient behaviour. In His teachings **Gotama Buddha** kept nothing hidden and allowed freedom of thought.

28. In respect of doubt and perplexity, Buddha explained thus:-

- (A) Doubt has arisen in a manner which is doubtful, so we must not be misled by:-
- (1) reports, or rumours without investigation.
 - (2) traditions,
 - (3) hearsay,
 - (4) the authority of religious texts, considering that is in accord with scriptures,
 - (5) mere logic or inferences or suppositions,
 - (6) considering appearances or seemingly acceptable
 - (7) the delight in speculative opinions or preconceived notion,
 - (8) assuming possibilities and assuming reasons,
 - (9) the idea that the speaker is our teacher, or the speaker seems to be a good person.
- (B) To give up when one came to know that certain things are unwholesome,
- (C) To accept and follow when one comes to know that certain things are wholesome.

and went further that a disciple should examine even the **Tatagata** (a synonym for Buddha or Buddhas in general), so that he might be fully convinced and become aware of the true nature of the teacher.

29. As there is no article of faith in Buddhism, doubt is not sin as understood in some other religions. Accor-

ding to Buddhism doubt *vicikiccha*, is one of the hinderances *nivarana*, to the clear understanding of Truth. In Buddhism the root of all evil is ignorance *avijja*, and false views *miccha-ditthi*.

30. When there is doubt perplexity and wavering, progress is impossible. There must be doubt as long as one does not understand or see clearly. Just to say "I believe" or "I do no doubt" does not solve the problem.

31. In order to progress further, it is necessary to get rid of doubt. To get rid of doubt one has to see clearly and understand thoroughly. To force oneself to believe and accept a thing is political and not spiritual or intellectual.

32. Gotama Buddha allowed not only freedom of thought but also allowed the sympathetic understanding and tolerance. The example of it is as follows:-

- (A) Mahāvira Niganta Natapuṭṭa a founder of Jainism was the contemporary of Gotama Buddha. As his views on certain points on the theory of Cause and Effect were quite different from Gotama Buddha's views, a prominent and distinguished Householder Upali, (a lay disciple of Mahavira) was sent to Gotama Buddha to contest in an argument on that subject. After the discussion Upali was convinced of Gotama Buddha's views and begged Gotama Buddha to accept him as lay disciple.
- (B) Gotama Buddha cautioned Upali saying that a man of his position should make a thorough investigation first, consider carefully and not to decide in a hurry.
- (C) Upali was overjoyed with the unexpected remarks of Gotama Buddha, more pleased and begged Gotama Buddha again and again to accept him.
- (D) Gotama Buddha accepted on repeated requests but urged Upali to pay respect and support his old teacher as he used to.

(It shows that one should not honour only his religion and condemn others and that one should honour other's too. It also shows that by doing so one's own religion grows. Following this example The Great Emperor Asoka of India, honoured and supported all other religion in his vast empire.)

33. The spirit of tolerance and understanding is one of the most cherished ideas of Buddhist Culture and Civiliza-

tion. Violence in any form and under any pretext whatsoever is, against the teachings of Gotama Buddha.

34. In order to understand Truth, it is not necessary to know the source of it. What is essential is seeing and understanding. Regarding this fact, there is an important story in the *Majjhima Nikaya* (collection of middle length discourses) of the *Sutta Pitaka*. The story goes:-

- (A) Without knowing each other, Gotama Buddha spent a night together with a young recluse.
- (B) Unknowingly, the young recluse addressed Gotama Buddha as "friend".
- (C) Observing the consistency of the young recluse, Gotama Buddha delivered the young recluse a remarkable discourse explaining Truth on that very night.
- (D) At the end of the discourse, the young recluse came to know that the person whom he was addressing as friend was Gotama Buddha, got up, apologised and begged Gotama Buddha to ordain him (to accept him in the order of the "saṅghas", mendicant monk).
- (E) To ordain a person in those days, one need to have alms-bowl and robe. When Gotama Buddha asked whether the needfuls are ready, the young recluse replied in the negative and went out in search of what was needed.
- (F) Unfortunately, the young recluse was savaged by a cow and died. The young recluse was Pukkusati.
- (G) When the sad news reached Gotama Buddha, He announced that Pukkusati had seen and understood the Truth and attained *anāgami* the penultimate stage, the third of the four stages in the realization of "nibbāna".

Note

There are four stages in the realization of Nibbana. The four stages are:-

The first stage "Sotapanna or Sottapaṭṭimegga"

He who attained this stage has entered the stream of Noble path. In other words stream entrant or the knowledge of stream winning.

The second stage "Sakadagami"

He who attained this stage will be reborn only once again after his death to step on to another stage.

The third stage "Anāgami"

It is the penultimate stage in the realization of nibbāna. He who attained this stage will be born in a realm where he would become an Arahāt. The stage is the (never returner) or (never to return to this existing world).

The fourth stage "Arahanta"

It is the highest and the final stage. In this stage he is liberated from all defilements and impurities as:- desire, hatred, ill-will, ignorance, conceit etc:- and is full of wisdom, compassion, and such other noble qualities. The stage is "Arahattaphala" or "Arahātship".

35. From the above story it is quite evident that Pukkusati had listened to Gotama Buddha's discourses without knowing who was expounding. He understood and saw clearly the Truth, after hearing the discourse. (From this we can conclusively say that, it is not necessary to know who or how it is prepared, or where it comes from, if the medicine is good enough the disease will be cured).

36. Gotama Buddha was so tolerant that he never exercised His power to give commandments. Instead of using the imperative He used the words as "It behoves you to do this", "It behoves you not to do this". The two stories of Upali and Pukkusati shows that Buddhism is saturated with the spirit of free enquiry and complete tolerance. It is thus the open mind and sympathetic heart of Gotama Buddha gave light and warmth on every being struggling in the ocean of birth and death.

37. Buddhist are aware of future consequences. He refrain from evil deeds not because it is bad and do good because it is good, but refrain from evil deeds because it retards and does good because it aids progress to the understanding of Truth.

38. Regarding the rule of conduct, an excellent code which is much more than moral teachings can be found in Buddhism. It deals with one way of life for the monks and another for the laity. Morality or conduct is only the preliminary stage on the path of purity, not conclusive to gain one's emancipation, not an end, but only means to an end. The basis of Buddhism is morality and wisdom is its apex. In Buddhism morality is neither founded on any doubtful revelation nor it is the ingenious invention of an exceptional mind, but a practical code based on verifiable facts and individual experiences.

39. As life is precious to all, it was Gotama Buddha who banned the sacrifice of poor beasts and admonished his followers to extend their loving kindness metta to all living beings, even to the tiniest creature that crawls. This metta breaks all barriers which separates one from another and a Buddhist exercises this loving-kindness metta towards every living being identifying himself with all, making no distinction of caste or sex.

40. With this Noble tolerance and loving-kindness Gotama Buddha abolished slavery and protested against the degrading caste system. The word Gotama Buddha uttered was "It is not by mere birth one becomes an out caste or a noble, but by one's action". Caste or social outstanding does not preclude one from becoming a Buddhist or from entering the celibate order. All are given equal privileges and were also given positions and ranks. It was He who raised the status of down-trodden women. He not only brought them to the realization of their importance to society but also founded the celibate order for them with rules and regulations.

41. Thus Sunita the scavenger attained Arahantship, Angulimala the criminal and the ferocious giant Alavaka were converted to compassionate saints. Eventually Angulimala turned out to be an Arahant and Alavaka attained the stage of Sotapati Maga.. The courtesan Ambapali attained Arahantship. Just as Ashin Sariputta Thera and Ashin Moggalam Thera were made the two chief disciples in the order of monks, Ashinma Khema and Ashinma Upalavanna the two Theries were made the two chief female disciples. Many female disciples too were named distinguished and pious followers.

Note

Although the honourable titles and distinguished ranks and positions in the celibate order were given as mentioned above by Gotama Buddha, what they deserved are the results of the accumulated effects of the causes or the deserving noble deeds, done by themselves throughout their previous existences and present lives. In other words they are the fruits of the perfections of paramies observed throughout their preceding and present lives.

42. People are so fond of discriminating labels, that they go so far as to put labels on human qualities and emotions so common to all. The love of a mother for her child is neither Buddhist nor any other religion. It is only "mother love".

43. Human qualities and emotions like love, charity, compassion, tolerance, patience, friendship, desire, ill-will, ignorance, conceit, etc:- need no sectarian label, they belong to no particular religion.

44. In the same way **dukkha** needs no label, it is not the monopoly of any body or any religion. Sectarian labels are the hindrances to the independent understanding of truth and prejudice in men's mind. Labels are immaterial. Buddhism, the name by which we gave to the teachings of Gotama Buddha is of little importance.

45. To understand truth, what is essential is seeing, knowing and understanding, not faith or belief, on which most religions are built. Buddhist **saddhā** which is usually translated as faith or belief is not as such. It is rather confidence born out of conviction. It must be admitted that, the original usage of the word **saddhā** has an element of faith, but it is only in a sense that signifies devotion to Buddha (the enlightened one) Dhamma (the teachings), and Saṅgha (the order).

46. According to the Great Philosopher Asanga's view **saddhā** has three aspects as:-

- (A) Full and firm conviction that a thing is.
- (B) Serene joy (calm, clear and peaceful) at good qualities.
- (C) Aspiration or wish to achieve an object in view.

47. The question of belief arises when there is no seeing. The moment you see, the question of belief disappears. A disciple of Buddha, Musila, told another monk Savihta that:-

- (A) Without devotion, faith or belief,
- (B) Without liking or inclination,
- (C) Without hearsay or tradition,
- (D) Without considering apparent reasons,
- (E) Without delight in the speculations of opinions,

he saw and knew that, the cessation of the process of birth and re-birth is **Nibbāna**.

48. The teachings of Gotama Buddha is qualified as **chippassika** inviting you to "come and see" but not to "come and believe". The expressions used in referring to persons who realized the Truth are:-

- (A) The dustless and stainless eye of Truth Dhamma-

cakkhu has arisen.

(B) Without wavering, has seen Truth, has attained Truth has known Truth, has crossed over doubt, has penetrated into Truth.

49. Thus persons who realized Truth with right wisdom sees things as they truly are **yathābhūtam**, Regarding His enlightenment Gotama Buddha said -

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| (A) The eye was born | Cakkhum udapādi |
| (B) Knowledge was born | Nāna udapādi |
| (C) Wisdom was born | Paññā udapādi |
| (D) Science was born | Vijjā udapādi |
| (E) Light was born | Āloko udapādi |

It is through knowledge or wisdom **nana dassana**, that one can realize truth and not believing through faith.

50. At the time when **nāna dassana** was more and more appreciated, Brahminic orthodoxy remained intolerantly insisted on believing their traditions as the only truth. Once a group of Brahmins had discussions with Gotama Buddha on that subject. Brahmins held to their belief making an absolute conclusion by themselves that their ancient holy scriptures handed down along the line unbroken by oral tradition of text are the only truth and everything else is false. At the end of the discussion, Gotama Buddha gave advice of extreme importance to that group saying, "It is not proper for a wise man who maintain(protects) Truth, to come to the conclusion this alone is true and everything else is false".

51. When a sixteen year old Kapathika, who was supposed to be the most brilliant among them asked to explain the idea, what maintaining or protecting Truth is, Gotama Buddha said-

- (A) A man who believes in one thing (certain view) says, "I believe this" so far he maintains the Truth, because of his belief, he should not say that his belief is the only Truth and everything else is false.
- (B) One should not be attached to one thing and look down upon others as inferior. The wise man calls this fettering (hindering progress).

52. A group of Gotama Buddha's disciples once said that they saw and understood the doctrine of Cause and Effect. Gotama Buddha wanting to let his disciples know how to treat his doctrines told them as an illustration that a

person who was in danger on a bank of a river, hurriedly made a raft, used it as a ferry, crossed over the river and reached the other bank. Then Gotama Buddha asked his disciples what that person should do to the raft which carried him to safety.

53. As His disciples couldn't find the way to give an appropriate answer, Gotama Buddha explained, how useful the raft is that carried a person in distress to safety and said, the raft is a utility, to use as a ferry only, not a thing to cling to and attached to, or to fondle and preserve as treasure. He explained, that His doctrines are similar to that raft (a raft which will carry to Nibbāna), only to use as utility and said furthermore, that he who understood and experienced his doctrine should not cling to it and preserve it as treasure. In the same way Gotama Buddha explained, that when one understood a certain view one should not keep it as possession, one should give up not only evil things "adhamma", but also "dhamma" after utilizing it.

54. Gotama Buddha's doctrines are meant to carry man across to safety, to peace, to happiness and tranquility and to attain Nibbāna, but not meant to carry along as a possession after experiencing it.

55. One day when Gotama Buddha was staying in Sampasa forest, in Kosambī (New Alahabad), He took some leaves from the forest in His hands and asked his disciples to compare the leaves in His hands with the leaves in that Sampasa forest. When answered that the leaves in the forest are more abundant when compared with the leaves in His hands, Gotama Buddha said "Of what I have known I have told you only a little, what I have not told you is because those are not useful, not leading to Nibbāna".

56. Although Gotama Buddha knew everything, he kept many problems unexplained. He did not say things and answer questions just to satisfy intellectual curiosity. It seems that there were some among his lay disciples who did not appreciate this attitude of His, for once a lay disciple Malunkyaputta put the following ten classical questions saying that if the blessed one gave appropriate answers to his questions he would continue to follow under Him, if not he would leave the Order.

- (A) Is the universe eternal?
- (B) Is the universe not eternal?
- (C) Is the universe finite?
- (D) Is the universe infinite?

- (E) Is soul the same as body?
- (F) Is soul one thing and body another thing?
- (G) Does the Tathagata exist after death?
- (H) Does the Tathagata not exist after death?
- (I) Does the Tathagata both (at the same time) exist and not-exist after death?
- (J) Does the Tathagata both (at the same time) not exist and not, not exist after death?

57. The questions raised were speculative, not fundamentally connected with the spiritual holy life. Whatever opinion or views one may have on the questions will only create imaginary problems, which will not lead to the cessation of universal sufferings. Gotama Buddha was not at all interested to answer and never did answer such questions.

58. In spite of the extortions made by Malunkyaputta, knowing that Malunkyaputta expecting answers would die without his questions answered, Gotama Buddha with loving kindness and greatest of sympathy, illustrated the following example, to make Malunkyaputta feel certain of the consequences of his mistakes said,

- (A) "Supposing a man was wounded by a poisonous arrow and was immediately taken to a surgeon to take out the arrow to get cured".
- (B) "Supposing the injured person refused the arrow be taken out unless he be given in detail the information about the person who shot, the make, the kind, and type of the bow and arrow, used in injuring him".
- (C) "What certainly will happen to that injured person is, he would die before he knew what he wanted to".

59. After citing the instance in illustration, instead of replying the ten classical questions on metaphysical problems, Gotama Buddha explained to Māluṅkyaputta about the "dukkha", "the arising of dukkha", "the cessation of dukkha", "the way leading to the cessation of dukkha" which are the Four Noble Truths.

60. The explanation of the Four Noble Truths and the useful advice given by Gotama Buddha which is conducive to aversion, detachment, cessation, tranquility, deep penetration, full realization, Nibbāna, gave the desired effect on Malunkyaputta. It is learnt that Malunkyaputta approached Gotama Buddha again for further instructions. We came to know also that Māluṅkyaputta complying the

instructions enthusiastically, finally became Arahant.

61. Most of the human beings in this world are unnecessarily disturbing their peace of mind, wasting valuable time on metaphysical problems. What Gotama Buddha explained and taught to Malunkyaputta should do good to those who are willing to see and understand the Truth.

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTH
 "cattari ariya saccani"

1. **Gotama Buddha** expounded his very first sermons to His old colleagues at Isipaiana (modern Sarnath) near Baneres. In pali Text the **Four Noble Truths** are given briefly in His first sermons. It is also learnt that In Buddhist scriptures the **Four Noble Truths** are explained in innumerable places again and again with greater detail and in different ways. If we study with the help of those references, explanations, we will find that the heart of **Gotama Buddha's** teachings lies in the **Four Noble Truths**.

2. **The Four Noble Truths are:-**

- (A) The First Noble Truth. "**dukkha**"
(the truth of sufferings)
- (B) The Second Noble Truth. "**samudaya**"
(the arising or the origin of sufferings)
- (C) The Third Noble Truth. "**nirodha**"
(the cessation of sufferings)
- (D) The Fourth Noble Truth. "**magga**"
(the way leading to the cessation of sufferings)

THE FIRST NOBLE TRUTH

D U K K H A "dukkha ariya sacca"

1. If the First Noble Truth be generally and superficially translated and interpreted to mean that life is but suffering and pain, it is unsatisfactory, and may even mislead one into regarding Buddhism as pessimistic.

2. Buddhism is neither pessimistic nor optimistic. It does not falsely console anyone, or frighten and agonize anyone. It takes the realistic view of life and of the world. It looks at things objectively *yathabhutam* and shows the way to perfect freedom, tranquility, and happiness.

3. Although *dukkha* in ordinary usage means sufferings, pain, sorrow, and misery, the aspect of the First Noble Truth which represents Gotama Buddha's views, includes deeper philosophical meanings and ideas, such as imperfection, impermanence, emptiness, instability. It is difficult to embrace the whole conception of the term. So it is better to leave it untranslated than give inadequate and wrong ideas.

4. In the *Anguttara Nikaya* one of the collections of Gotama Buddha's doctrines and discourses, there is a list of happiness such as:-

(A) Happiness of a family life.	Happiness of the life of a recluse.
(B) Happiness of sense pleasure.	Happiness of renunciation.
(C) Happiness of attachment.	Happiness of detachment.
(D) Physical happiness	Mental happiness.

and so on. But it is mentioned that all other forms of happiness are included in the word *dukkha*.

5. In the *mahadukkhakhandha sutta* of the *majjhimanikaya* Gotama Buddha praised the spiritual happiness of *jhana* state (recueilment or trance, attained by the practice of higher meditation, which is free from sensations both pleasant *sukha* and unpleasant *dukkha*) stated that they are impermanent for all are subject to change (*anicca dukkha viparinama dhamma*).

6. It must be noted that the word **dukkha** explicitly used is not because there is suffering, but because whatever is impermanent is **dukkha** (**yadaniccam tam dukham**).

7. **Gotama Buddha** was realistic and objective, with regard to life and the enjoyment of sense pleasures, He behaved to understand clearly the following three things:

(A) **assāda** (attraction or enjoyment).

You are attracted to a sight of a pleasant, charming, and beautiful person (he or she) and enjoy seeing that person again and again. Thus derived pleasure in doing so. This derived satisfaction is known as enjoyment. (It is a fact of experience).

(B) **ādīnava** (evil consequences or unsatisfactoriness or danger).

Pleasantness, charms and beauty, all being impermanent, whenever situation changes you are deprived of its enjoyments and become sad, unreasonable, unbalanced, and may behave foolishly. These are evil consequence. (It is also a fact of experience).

(C) **nissarana** (freedom or liberation)

When all attachment to those pleasantness, charms and beauty is completely detached, it is freedom. (It is not a fact of experience, experienced only after the realization of Truth).

8. From the above example it is evident that Buddhism is neither pessimistic nor optimistic. In order to understand life completely and to find the possible ways to true liberation we must take into account the pleasures, pains, and sorrows of life and also of freedom.

9. The conception of **dukkha** may be viewed from the three aspects as:-

(A) **dukkha**

dukkha as ordinary suffering.

(B) **viparināma dukkha**

dukkha as produced by change.

(C) **saṅkhāra dukkha**

dukkha as conditioned state.

10. The First aspect is sufferings of life as:- birth, old age, disease and death, associated with unpleasantness, separation from beloveds or pleasant persons, and the state of not getting what one desires, grief, lamentation and distress.

11. The second aspect is that, since all happy feelings and conditions are not everlasting, and are impermanent, whenever happiness or pleasant conditions change, it causes suffering and unhappiness.

12. The two aspects are the physical and mental suffering which are common experiences in our daily walks of life universally known and easy to understand.

13. The third aspect is the most important and requires analytical explanation. What we consider as "being" or "individual" or "I", according to Buddhism or Buddhist philosophy, is a combination of everchanging physical and mental forces of energies which may be divided into five groups of aggregates **pancakkhandha**. Here Gotama Buddha distinctly defined that **dukkha** as the five aggregates, and elsewhere. He defined that the five aggregates are **dukkha**. So it is clearly understood that the five aggregates and **dukkha** are not two different things.

What are the Five Aggregates?

14. "Know thyself" is the advice of all wise. What do we actually know about ourselves or our own nature? Each of us convinced the importance and uniqueness of ourselves. That knowledge we have is only superficial. Introspectively at deeper level, we know nothing of our own nature. Gotama Buddha motivated, not simply by curiosity but rather by His compassionate nature and the wish to help all beings to get rid of universal sufferings, tried His utmost best. Laying aside all preconceptions, He explored within His own nature and discovered the reality 2500 years ago. Thus by the direct experience, He realized that every being is a composite of five processes or forces of energies, one physical and the other four mental. All of which arising and passing away and is in tumult. All the five processes He termed as **panccakkhandha**, the Five Aggregates. The Five Aggregates are:-

- (A) The First Aggregate is "**rupakkhandha**" the aggregate of matter.
- (B) The Second Aggregate is "**Vedanākkhandha**" the aggregate of sensations.
- (C) The Third Aggregate is "**sannakkhandha**" the aggregate of perception.
- (D) The Fourth Aggregate is "**sankharakkhandha**" the aggregate of mental formation or reaction.
- (E) The Fifth aggregate is "**vinnanakkhandha**" the aggregate of consciousness.

15. **The First Aggregate "rupakkhandha" the Aggregate of matter.**

- (A) This aggregate of matter is the most obvious, the most apparent portion of ourselves, the body.
- (B) Being material, our body, the so called ourselves is readily perceived by all senses and seems that one can control and make it move accordingly to the conscious will. But the internal organs of it function without our knowledge. The incessant biochemical reactions occur within each cell of our body are beyond our control. We know nothing experimentally of the subtle reactions taking place every moment.
- (C) Gotama Buddha found out 2500 years ago that the ultimate reality that the seemingly solid body of ourselves and the entire material universe was composed of continuously arising and vanishing in an empty space of sub atomic particles or individual units, which arises and vanishes into and out of existence. The sub atomic particles He termed as kalapas.
- (D) kalapas or indivisible units each exhibit an endless variation of cattari maha bhutani the basic qualities of matter the Four Great Elements:- solidity(mass), fluidity(cohesion), heat(temp:), and motion (movement). The body which each of us called as "myself" and the entire universe, all are the combination of the Four Great Elements to form structures which seems to have permanency. Actually all are composed of minuscules kalapas continuously arising and passing away in a constant stream of waves.
- (E) In this aggregate the Four Great Elements and its derivatives upadaya rupa, the five material sense organs:- eye, ear, nose, tongue and body and their corresponding objects in the external world:- visible form, sound, odour, taste and tangible things and also some thoughts or ideas or conceptions which are in the sphere of mind objects, dhammayatana are included. The whole realm of matter both internal and external are included in this First Aggregate, The Aggregate of Matter.

16. Just as there is physical process, there is also psychic process, the mental functionings or the stages occurred step by step in the mind. Mind that can neither be touched nor seen, it is even more intimately connected with ourselves than our body. We will not be able to

recollect the happenings of the past, or imagine pictures of future existances without mind. Yet very often we experienced that mind refuses to do what we want and does what we do not want. Mind can be categorized as conscious mind and unconscious mind. Conscious mind is subtle and tenuous enough but the unconscious mind is filled with forces which may not approve or be aware.

17. **Gotama Buddha** also examined the mind and found the four mental functionings or mental processes and revealed the world terming those four in continuance of the First Aggregate as second, third, fourth, and fifth aggregates.

The Second Aggregate "vedānakkhandha" the aggregate of sensations.

18. This aggregate is the part of the mind, the function of which is to feel the sensation whenever the contact of physical and mental organs with the objects of the external world.

(A) In this aggregate included all sensations (pleasant, unpleasant and neutral), experienced through the contact of physical and mental organs with the external world. There are six kinds of sensations such as sensation experienced through the contact of:-

- | | | |
|------------|------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) eye | with | visible forms, |
| (2) ear | with | sound, |
| (3) nose | with | odour, |
| (4) tongue | with | taste |
| (5) body | with | tangible things, |
| (6) mind | with | mind objects or thoughts or idea. |

(B) Here we need to explain about the term "mind". Buddhism does not recognize spirit as opposed to matter. In Buddhist philosophy, mind *manas* is only a faculty *indriya* of the six faculties, like eye or ear. Like other faculty or organ it can be controlled and developed. The only difference between material or physical organ and the mind is; for example, eye senses the world of physical forms, whereas mind senses the world of ideas thoughts and mental objects.

(C) Ideas, thoughts, and mind objects are not independent of the five material and physical sense organs they depend on and are conditioned by physical experiences.

The Third Aggregate "saññākkhandha" the aggregate of perceptions.

19. This aggregate is the part of the mind, the function of which is to distinguish, categorize and make evaluation of the incoming data in the mind. Like the above mentioned aggregate of sensations, perceptions are of six kinds in relation to the six internal faculties and the corresponding six external objects. It is the perception that recognizes objects whether physical or mental.

The Fourth Aggregate "sankhāraakkhandha" the aggregate of mental formations

20. This aggregate is the part of the mind, the function of which is to react on the sensation as *dukkha vedanā*, *sukha vedanā*, *adukkha masukha vedanā*, formed by the contact of the physical and mental organs and the objects of the external world.

- (A) In this aggregate all volitional activities are included. What is generally known as karma comes under this group. Any sort of sensation takes place in the mind, this part of mind reacts accordingly.
- (B) Gotama Buddha said volition *cetanā* is *kamma* and explained as:-
 - (1) Volition is mental construction, mental activities and its functions are to direct the the mind to do good or bad or something neutral. In other words, react accordingly to the sensation formed.
 - (2) *kamma* is volitional action, having will to do, one acts through body, speech and mind, under the direction of volition.
- (C) Just like sensations and perceptions, volition the mental formations or reactions is also of six kinds, connected with the six internal faculties and their corresponding six objects of the external world (physical and mental).
- (D) Sensations and perceptions do not produce karmic effects, whereas volitional actions the mental formation or reaction can produce karmic effect such as:-

(1) attention	" <i>manasikāra</i> "
(2) will	" <i>chanda</i> "
(3) determination	" <i>adhimokkha</i> "
(4) confidence	" <i>saddhā</i> "
(5) concentration	" <i>samādhi</i> "

(6) wisdom	"panna"
(7) energy	"viriya"
(8) desire	"rāga"
(9) repugnance	"paṭigha"
(10) ignorance	"avījjā"
(11) conceit	"mana"
(12) idea of self	"sakkāya ditthi"

etc:- only can produce karmic effect. There are (50) such mental activities which constitutes the aggregate in mental formations.

The Fifth Aggregate "vinnanakkhandha" the aggregate of consciousness.

21. This aggregate is the part of the mind, the function of which is to note each and every occurrences of contact made by the physical and mental organs and the objects of the external world which are to be taken into the mind as raw material.

(A) consciousness is a reaction or response conditioned by the contact of one of the six internal faculties with the external phenomena; the visible forms, sound, odour, taste, tangible things and mind objects. Like sensations and perceptions consciousness also is of six kinds in relation to the six internal faculties or organs and their corresponding external objects.

(B) Consciousness does not recognize an object. It is aware only of its presence, whereas the Third Aggregate (perception) recognizes. Consciousness is named according to whatever condition through which it arises, such as:-

(1) On account of eye and visible forms arises consciousness and is called **Visual consciousness.**

(2) On account of ear and sound arises consciousness and is called **Auditory consciousness.**

(3) On account of nose and odour arises consciousness and is called **Olfactory consciousness.**

(4) On account of tongue and taste arises consciousness and is called **Gustatory consciousness.**

(5) On account of body and tangible objects arises consciousness and is called **Tactile consciousness.**

(6) On account of the mind and the mind objects arises consciousness and is called **Mind**

consciousness.

- (C) Visual consciousness arises only when there is a condition of eye, visual form, light, attention (**manasikara**), but ceases then and there when the condition is no longer there. Because of the changes of the conditions, the visual consciousness does not change over to any other consciousness.
- (D) Gotama Buddha declared that consciousness cannot exit independently. It depends on matter, sensations, perceptions and mental formations. He said consciousness may exist:-
- (1) having matter as its means **rūpupāyam**, as its object **rūpārammaṇam**, as its support **rūpāpatitham** and seeking delight, it may grow, increase and develop.
 - (2) having sensations as its means, as its object as its support, and seeking delight, it may grow increase and develop.
 - (3) having perceptions as its means, as its object, as its support and seeking delight, it may grow, increase and develop.
 - (4) having mental formation as its means, as it object, as its support, and seeking delight, it may grow, increase, and develop.
- (E) Apart from matter, sensation, perception, and mental formation, there cannot be the coming, the going, the passing away, the arising, the increase or development of consciousness.

22. The four mental functionings, the five aggregates on psychic aspect, depends one on the other in a series of progressive links. To have a clear vision of the broad overall terms of the four aggregates on psychic aspects we may arrange the four processes or the four mental functionings in appropriate order and explain precisely as:-

- (A) Firstly, the fifth aggregate "**Vinnanakkhandha**" the aggregate of consciousness. It is the receiving part of the mind. It simply registers or notes the reception of any input, physical or mental without assigning label or making value judgement.
- (B) Secondly, the third aggregate "**Sannakkhandha**" the aggregate of perception. It is the recognition part of the mind which identifies, distinguishes, labels and categorizes the incoming data, whatever has been noted by the aggregate of consciousness and makes evaluation.
- (C) Thirdly, the second aggregate "**Vedanākkhandha**" the aggregate of sensations. It is the sensing

part of the mind. As soon as any input is received, sensation arises a signal, that something is happening. So long as the input is not evaluated by the aggregate of perception, the sensation remains neutral. But once the incoming data is evaluated the sensation becomes pleasant or unpleasant depending on the evaluation given.

- (D) Fourthly, the fourth aggregate "Sankhāra-kkhandha" the aggregate of mental function or reaction. It is part of the mind which reacts with liking or disliking. It is the most active part of the mind where immediate wish is formed in accordance with the arising of sensations. If the sensation is pleasant a wish is formed to prolong and intensify the experience. If the sensation is unpleasant the wish is to stop that experience. Thus volition, the mental construction is formed and its activities generates.

23. Whenever the sense, conditioned by the contact of any of the six internal faculties with the external phenomena, receives an input, the same steps -> consciousness, perception, sensation and reaction, occurs. These four mental functions are ever more fleeting than the endless variation of ephemeral particles *kalapas*, composing the material reality and repeatedly, the process occurs, that one is unaware of what is happening. Only when a particular reaction has been repeated over a longer period and has taken a pronounced intensified form, that awareness of it, develops at the conscious level. That is how conscious mind comes about. Such experiences occur quite often that our mind drifted away without our knowledge, may be the **unconscious mind**, which carried away causing awful mishaps.

(The above are the brief account of the Five Aggregates)

24. As human being or a person is composed of the realities of matter *rūpakkhandha*, sensation *vedanākkhandha*, perception *saññakkhandha*, mental formation *sankhāra-kkhandha* and consciousness *viññānakkhandha*, the five aggregates which is in the nature of arising and passing away, the picture of a human being is everchanging and non lasting. In a more striking respects, the following casts the dis-cription of a human being that:

- (A) Each human being or a person is in fact a series

of separate, but related events, each event is the result of the preceding one and follows it without any pause or interval.

(B) The unbroken progression of closely connective events gives the appearance of continuity of identity, an apparent or external reality, a superficial one, not ultimate truth.

(C) A human being or a person is not a finished, unchanging entity, but a process flowing from moment to moment. There is no real "being"; but merely and on going flow of a continuous process of becoming.

Introspection at deeper levels, the entire universe, animate or inanimate is in a constant state of becoming. (the arising and passing away).

25. Each of us has a congenial assurance the instinctive assertion that there is (I), a continuing identity somewhere within us. In our daily walks of life too, operating on the unthinkable assumption, that we will not respect each other and that we will not be able to function dealings, we deal each other as persons of more or less defined, unchanging, nature or entity. We accept such external reality, superficial one, and we each actually live our lives with the deep rooted conviction (I was), (I am) and (I will be).

26. The idea or concept persisted from the earliest to the present day that consciousness "Vinnana" is (self), (atman), (soul), (spirit) or (ego), which retains as unchanging matter. It must be repeated here that there is no unchanging ever lasting permanent substance as opposed to matter.

27. Buddhism does not recognize (self) or (soul) or (atman) or (spirit) or (ego). What we call a being, or an individual, or "I", is a name or label given to the Five Aggregates. All are impermanent and constantly changing. As stated that "yadaniccam tam dukkham" whatever impermanent is "dukkha" the Five Aggregates, the aggregates of attachments being not the same for two consecutive moments and are in the flux of momentary arising and disappearing, the five aggregates of attachments are "dukkha".

28. As the world is in a continuous flux, the disappearing of one thing is the conditioning for the arising of the next in a series of cause and effect. There is no unchanging substance in them and there is no permanent (self) or (atman) or (individual) or (I), behind them. Neither matter, sensation perception, mental formation

nor consciousness, can be called (self) or (atman) or (individual) or (I). The five physical and mental aggregates are interdependent, when working together we get the idea of (I), which is only a false idea "sakkayaditṭhi". A mental formation is nothing but one of those (50) mental formations explained in the Fourth Aggregate.

29. The Five Aggregates which we called "a being" are "dukkha" itself, "samkhara dukkha". Therefore:-

- (A) there is no other "being" or "I" standing behind the five aggregates who experiences "dukkha" but "dukkha" itself.
- (B) there is mere suffering, no sufferer is found.
- (C) there is no unmoving mover behind the movement, it is only the movement. It is incorrect to say that life is moving, but life is movement itself.
- (D) there is no thinker behind the thought, thought itself is the thinker. If you remove the thought there is no thinker to be found.

(The above are the precise explanation of the First Noble Truth).

30. It is extremely important to understand the First Noble Truth properly by experience, so that we shall find the clue to lead us out of suffering. Gotama Buddha said that he who sees "dukkha".

- (A) sees the rising of "dukkha",
- (B) sees the cessation of "dukkha",
- (C) sees the path leading to the cessation of "dukkha".

31. Contrary to the wrong imagination, that the life of a Buddhist is melancholy, sorrowful, gloomy; a Buddhist, a true Buddhist, is the happiest of all beings, because:-

- (A) He has no anxieties or fear,
- (B) He is always calm and peaceful.
- (C) He can not be upset or dismayed by changes of calamities (serious misfortune or disaster).
- (D) He sees things as they truly are.

32. One of the principal evils of life according to Buddhism is "repugnance" or "hatred". Repugnance *patigha* is explained as ill-will, with regard to all living beings, with regard to sufferings, and with regard to things pertaining to sufferings. The function of "patigha" is to

produce facts, or basis of, or force to, unhappy states and bad conducts. Therefore:-

- (A) It is wrong to be impatient or to be angry at sufferings. So doing it will add more trouble than the removal of it.
- (B) What is necessary is to understand the question of sufferings, how it comes, how to get rid of it, and to work accordingly with patience, intelligence, determination and energy.

33. Gotoma Buddha's teachings are quite opposed to the melancholic, sorrowful penitent and gloomy attitude of mind, which are considered as hindrances to the realization of Truth. The Five Hindrances "nivarana" are:-

- (A) Lustful desires "kāmacchanda".
- (B) Ill-will, hatred or anger "vyāpāda".
- (C) Torpor and languor "thina middha" (dull sorry and inactive, unhappy because of desire.)
- (D) Restlessness and worry "uddhacca-kukkucca"
- (E) Skeptical doubt "vicikicchā" (doubting state or an attitude of mind).

34. If we only realize, or are fully aware, or clearly understand, the above precise explanation of the First Noble Truth, we can say that, we have grasped the Joy "pīti", which is one of the (Seven Factors of Illumination "bojjhāngas", which are the essential qualities to be cultivated for the realization of Absolute Reality, The Ultimate Truth, The Nibbāna).

35. "The Seven Factors of Illumination" are:-

- (A) Mindfulness "sati". To be aware and mindful in all activities and movements, both physical and mental.
- (B) Investigation and research into the various problems of doctrine "dhamma vijaya". In this factor include the ethical and philosophical studies of Gotoma Buddha's teachings as reading, research, discussions, conversations, attending lectures relating to such doctrinal subjects, which is to gain "paññā" wisdom.
- (C) Energy "viriya" To work with determination and energy till the end.
- (D) Joy "pīti" Deep pleasure, great gladness, the quality quite contrary to the pessimistic, gloomy of melancholic attitude of mind.
- (E) Relaxation "passaddhi". That one should not be

- stiff physically or mentally (of body and mind).
- (F) **Concentration "samādhi"**. One pointedness of mind.
- (G) **Equanimity "upekkhā"**. To be able to face life in all vicissitude (changes of wealth to poverty, and success to failure) with calmness of mind, tranquility, without disturbance.

36. "The Seven Factors of Illumination" as stated precisely, will be accomplished if we study carefully the remaining three of the Four Noble Truths, and comply with the directives pointed out thus.

THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

S A M U D A Y A "dukkha samudaya ariya sacca"

1. The Second Noble Truth is that of the arising of dukkha. We need to know who or what makes the sufferings. We cannot avoid the truth of the existence of sufferings and cannot deny that life is imperfect, incomplete, and unsatisfactory. The important things for us to know are whether suffering has a cause and if so whether it is possible to remove that cause.

2. If the events that cause our suffering are simple, random, accidental, over which we have no control or influence, we are powerless to find the way out of it. Or if our sufferings are dictated by an omnipotent being acting in an arbitrary and inscrutable manner, we ought to find out to propitiate this being, so that he will no longer inflict suffering on us. Our suffering is not merely a product of chance. As there are causes for all phenomena, there must be causes behind sufferings. The law of cause and effect is universal and fundamental to existence.

3. From the time memorial, man with *taṇhā* (desire, greed, craving, thirst), as his companion, has been flowing in the stream of repeated existence, experiencing various types of miseries, dies again and again, not putting an end to the rolling, everchanging, unbroken process of becoming. Gotama Buddha explained that the perils of this never ending process of rolling, everchanging, can only be broken by, rightful understanding and realizing fully, that *taṇhā* is the cause and to eradicate it completely.

4. So the answer to the question, who or what makes the sufferings is, *taṇhā* which produces re-existence, re-birth, re-becoming (*ponobhavika*), bound up with passionate greed (*nandi raga saha gata*) and finds delight now here and now there (*tatra tatra bhinan dini*), that makes the sufferings.

5. Although it is the *tanha* manifesting in various ways that gives rise to dukkha (universal sufferings) it is not to be taken as first cause or origin. There is no first cause possible according to Buddhism, everything is related and interdependent, in an unending circle. Gotama Buddha, though he knew all the ins and outs of this and all the celestial worlds, did not in the least attempt to show the evolution of the world from primordial matters.

for those are not concerned with eradication of universal sufferings.

6. Gotama Buddha as Siddhattha Gotama, discovered the practical aspect of Dhamma, which is the doctrine of *paṭicca sammupāda*. *Paṭicca* means because of, or dependent upon, and *sammupāda* means arising or origination. Therefore *paṭicca sammupāda* means dependent arising, or dependent origination, or conditioned genesis. It consists of twelve factors or links, linking consecutively.

7. It must be borne in mind that *paṭicca samuppāda* is not theory or the ultimate origin of life, it is only a discourse on the process of birth and death. It deals with the cause of re-birth and sufferings. According to the doctrine, the twelve links the origin of each link depends on the preceding one forming a wheel of becoming *bhava cakka*. The vicious circle of misery rotates on and on, keeps turning, bringing nothing but sufferings.

8. The twelve links, forming the wheel of becoming *paṭicca samuppāda* shows how life arises, exists and continues. The twelve links are:-

- (A) *avijja paccaya saṃkhara*. (dependent on ignorance arises activities moral and immoral).
- (B) *saṃkhāra paccaya viññāna*. (dependent on activities arises consciousness).
- (C) *viññāna paccayā nāmarūpaṃ*. (dependent on consciousness arises physical and mental phenomena mind and matter).
- (D) *nāmarūpaṃ paccayā saḷāyatana*. (dependent on mind and matter arises the six sphere of sense organs 'the six faculties, - five physical sense organs and mind').
- (E) *saḷāyatana paccayā phassa*. (dependent on six sphere of senses, arises sensorial and mental contacts).
- (F) *phassa paccayā vedanā*. (dependent on contact arises feelings sensations).
- (G) *vedana paccayā taṇhā*. (dependent on feelings arises craving, desire, greed, thirst).
- (H) *taṇhā paccayā upādānaṃ*. (dependent on craving arises grasping clinging).
- (I) *upādānaṃ paccayā bhava*. (dependent on grasping arises action, 'process of becoming').
- (J) *bhava paccavā jāti*. (dependent on action arises re-birth).
- (K) *jāti paccayā jarā - maraṇa*. (dependent on birth arises decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain).

9. Thus the entire aggregate of suffering arises. The first two of the twelve links pertain to the past, the middle eight to the present and the last two to the future.

10. *taṇhā*, though it is not the first or the only cause of the arising of *dukkha*, it being the most palpable and immediate cause, or the principle thing, or the prevailing thing, is given the first place.

11. *taṇhā* includes not only the desire for, and attached to, sense pleasures and palaces, but also desire for, and attached to, *dhamma taṇhā* (ideas, ideals, views, opinions, theories, beliefs). All the troubles and strivings in this world; all economical, political, social problems are rooted in this selfish *taṇhā*. Therefore what the world wants and hankers after, is enslavement to (desire, greed, craving, thirst) *taṇhā daso*.

12. To understand how thirst can produce re-existence re-birth, re-becoming, we must have some idea of the theory of *kamma* or re-birth.

13. In this unbalanced world, we perceive inequalities in numerous grades of human beings. One born into a condition of affluence, another into a condition of abject poverty. Some virtuous and holy, while some vicious foolish but accounted to be fortune's darling instead of ill-luck to greet him. We found among mankind those of brief life and those of long, the hale and ailing, good looking and bad, powerful and powerless, low born and high born, poor and rich. Even among identical twins, inheriting like genes, enjoying the same privileges of upbringing, often become temperamentally, morally and intellectually different totally from each other.

14. It may be questioned why for all these unevenness in mankind. On one occasion, a young man named Subha approached Gotama Buddha and asked the same. Gotama Buddha briefly replied that every being has *kamma* as its own, as its cause, as its kinsmen, as its refuge. *Kamma* is that what differentiates all beings into low and high.

15. According to Buddhism those variations are to the result of our own inherited past action and present deeds. We build our own hell, we create our own heaven, we are the architect of our own fate. From a Buddhist standpoint, our present mental, intellectual, moral, and temperamental differences are mainly due to our own action and tendencies, both past and present. In short we ourselves are our own *kamma*.

16. **Kamma** literally means action or doing, but means only volitional action the meritorious and demeritorious volition **kusala**, **akusala**, **cetana**. In Buddhist terminology, it never means its effect, its effect is known as the fruit or the result of **kamma** (**kamma phala** or **kamma vipaka**) **kamma** may be good or bad relatively to volition or desire. **Kusala** (good **kamma**) produces good effect and **akusala** (bad **kamma**) produces bad effect.

17. **tanha**, volition, **kamma** whether good or bad has only one force as its effect, that is force to continue. Although good and bad are opposite, the effect of the karmic forces do not lead towards opposite directions, lead but to the same direction along in the circle of continuity **samsara**. As for an Arahant, being free from all defilements and impurities, His action does not accumulate **kamma**. For Him there is no re-birth.

18. For the existence and continuity of a being, the necessities are the four nutriments **aharas**, in the sense of cause and condition, they are:-

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| (A) kabalinkarahara | Ordinary material food
(our daily bread) |
| (B) Phassahara | Contact of our sense
organs including mind
with the external world. |
| (C) vinnanahara | consciousness |
| (D) manosincetanahara | mental volition or will. |

19. Of the four, mental volition **manosincetanahara** is the will to live, to exist, to re-exist, to continue, to become more and more, accumulate more and more, creating the root of existence and continuity, striving forward by the way of good and bad actions **kusala akusala kamma**.

20. In the First Noble Truth it is explained that **yadan iccam tam dukkham** whatever impermanent is **dukkha**. Subsequently we came to know that the Five Aggregates which make up an individual being not the same for two consecutive moments are **dukkha**, and that the Five Aggregates and **dukkha** are no two different things. **Kamma** comes under the Fourth Aggregate, the aggregate of mental formation **samkharakkhandha**. We also came to know that volition (**cetana**) is mental construction, mental activities directing the mind to do good or bad. Gotama Buddha definitely defined that volition is **kamma**.

21. **Tanha** is manifesting in several ways that give rise to **dukkha**. Thus formed **dukkha** is of three forms of **tanha**-

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| (A) kamma tanha | (thirst for sense pleasure) |
| (B) bhava tanhā | (thirst for existence) |
| (C) vibhava tanha | (thirst for non-existence) |

and Gotama Buddha stated that, when one understands **manosancetanahara** (mental volition, or will), one understands the three forms of **tanha** and can differentiate whether **kusala** (good deeds) or **akusala** (evil deeds).

22. Thus the terms **tanha**, **volition**, **manosancetanahara**, and **kamma** all of them denote the desire for the thirst of "wilt to be", "wilt to exist", "wilt to re-exist", "wilt to become more and more", and "wilt to accumulate more and more".

23. The theory of **kamma**, should not be confused with moral justice or reward and punishment. It is the theory of cause and effect, of action and reaction. It is a natural law, which has nothing to do with the idea of justice. Justice is ambiguous and is dangerous, may do more harm than good. Good or bad results, relative to volition and desire, is neither justice nor reward and punishment, meted out by a body or power sitting in judgment on a person's action.

24. According to the theory of **kamma**, volitional action may continue to manifest even in life after death. As it is difficult to understand easily, we need to explain what death is.

25. We have already seen that a being is a combination of physical and mental energies (the Five Aggregates). Death is the non functioning of the physical body, the end of the temporary phenomena (the visible manifestation of invisible karmic force).

26. Some think that the effects, the force of energies of volitional actions stop altogether with the nonfunctioning of the physical body. As the will, volition, **tanhā** all are the energies to exist, to continue, to become more and more, to accumulate more and more, it is a tremendous force that moves the whold world. Although the organic life at present, has ecased. As long as this karmic force exists, the effects, or the energies or volitional actions will remain entirely undisturbed by the disintegration of the fleeting body.

27. Buddhist aspect in mental force of energy, does not stop with death. It continues to appear in the another physical form. This we call re-existence or re-birth. It

is **kamma** rooted in ignorance and craving that conditioned re-birth. Past **kamma** conditions the present birth, and the present **kamma** in combination with the past **kamma** conditions the future. The present is the offspring of the past, and becomes in turn the parent of the future.

28. If we postulate the past, present and future lives we are faced with the mysterious problem of what the ultimate origin of life is. Either there must be a beginning or beginningless. From the scientific standpoint, we are the direct products of the sperm and ovum cells provided by the parents. So life precedes life, but the first protoplasm of life, scientists plead ignorance.

29. **Buddhism** is chiefly concerned with the problem of sufferings and its destruction, deals not with speculations that do not tend to the edification or liberation from suffering. All irrelevant side issues and those which will perplex human mind are completely ignored and set aside.

30. According to Buddhism, we are born from the matrix of action **kammayone**. There are three things to become a being.

- (A) As being precedes being, parents merely provide an infinitesimally small cells (sperm and ovum)
- (B) At the moment of conception, past **kamma** conditions the initial consciousness that vitalizes the foetus.
- (C) And then comes the phenomenon of life in an already extant physical phenomena.

31. For a being to be born, a being must die somewhere. The birth of a being (the arising of the Five Aggregates or physical phenomena in this present life), corresponds to the death of a being in the past life. Birth and death are the only two phases of the same process. Birth precedes death and death precedes birth. This constant succession of birth and death of each individual life flux, is technically known as **samsāra** (recurrent wandering) or **samsāric circus**.

32. In explaining the life stream of beings, How can we believe that there is re-birth and past existence? The answer to the question can only be stated that the re-birth and past existence can neither be proved nor disproved experimentally, but it is accepted as an evidentially verifiable fact. The most valuable evidential fact cited in favour of re-birth and past existence are:-

- (A) **Gotama Buddha** developed a knowledge which enabled him to read past and future lives.
- (B) His disciples, following his instructions, had also developed that sort of knowledge and were able to read their past lives to a great extent.
- (C) There are many a distinguished personages before the advent of **Gotama Buddha**, who had developed psychic powers as clairaudience, clairvoyance, thought readings, remembering past births, and so on.
- (D) Though it is very rare, very often at times, we meet persons who developed the memory of their past birth and can relate fragments of their past life, while few others in hypnotic state can read the past lives of others and can even heal diseases with such inherited powers.
- (E) Often we meet persons, whom we have never met, and yet we instinctively feel that they are quite familiar. Often we visit places, never been before and yet feel impressed that we are perfectly acquainted with those surroundings.

33. The most valuable evidential facts mentioned above, shed some light upon the problem of re-birth and past existence. Into this world ther came perfect ones as **Buddhas** and highly developed personalities. Among those perfect ones **Gotama Buddha** possessed **abhinna** (the five supernormal powers) as **dibbacakkhu nana**, **dibbasota nana**, **pubbenivāsānussati ñāṇa**, **paracitta vija nana** and **iddhivida naṇa**. Out of the five super normal powers **pubbenivasanussati ñāṇa** is the reminiscence of past births. It is well known that **Gotama Buddha** had to fulfill his ten paramis (perfection for Buddhahood) through out his preceding lives in the (samsaric circle). This throws a glaring light that there is re-birth or past lives.

34. There are also many a man of genius and infant prodigies. To account for their great characters and supreme knowledges, it can't be evolved suddenly in the short expanse of a life time, or the product of a single life. It can only be the accumulated knowledge and experiences gained through the noble lives of their past existences. To account for the unevenness or inequalities in numerous grades of human beings (even among like genes, the identical twins), the vast diversity in mind and moral, brain and physique; there are virtuous persons very often unfortunate, and vicious persons prosper. It can not be so in any case, of heredity or of circumstances and environment, or by mere chance, but the ultimate effects of either one of the good or evil deeds done in their past existen-

ces.

35. Before going to the life after death, we need to consider what life is and how it continues. Life the combination of physical and mental energies, do not remain the same for two consecutive moments. Every moment they are born they die, but they continue. The series is nothing but movement that continues unbroken but changing every moment. Physical and mental forces of energy which constitutes a being, has within themselves the power to take a new form, grow gradually and gather forces to the full. For example:-

- (A) A flame that kindles throughout the night is not the same flame every moment, and is not the other flame either.
- (B) A child who grows up to be man of sixty is not the child sixty years ago, nor is he another person.
- (C) Similarly, a person who dies here and is reborn else where, is neither the same person nor another "na ca so, na ca anno". It is only the continuity of the same series.

36. The difference of time between death and re-birth is very swift. The last thought moment in this life, conditions the first thought moment in the next life. In fact, it is the continuity of the next series. During the life time itself too, one thought moment conditions the next thought moment. Therefore the question of life after death is not a mystery.

37. From the explanations given in this chapter, we come to know that kamma means, volitional action and its result relatively to volition, produces good or bad effects. Whether action is done out of good volition or bad volition (kusala or akusala), it directs towards the same direction, that is along with the cycle of continuity samsāra. We also find that tanhā, nutriment of mental volition and kamma, all denotes "to exist", "to re-exist", "to become more and more", "to accumulate more and more", striving forward by way of good or evil deeds. Therefore the cause or the germ of the arising of dukkha can be found within the four mental functionings of the Five Aggregates.

38. Which mental action determines our fate, "to exist", "to become more and more", "to accumulate more and more", striving forward by way of good and evil? If the mind consists of nothing but consciousness, perception, sensa-

tion and mental formation (reaction), which of these gives rise to suffering? Each of them is involved. However, consciousness merely receives the raw incoming data, whereas perception places the data in a category making evaluation, and after that sensation signals the occurrence of the previous steps. The three are primarily passive, their responsibility is to digest the incoming information. Only then, mental formation or reaction comes into play, the passivity give way to activity, (attraction or repulsion) with liking or disliking. The reaction sets in motion a fresh chain of events.

39. The real Kamma, the real cause of suffering is the mental formation *sankhāra*. The process of the four mental functionings occur with lightening like rapidity with each subsequent contact, one may be unaware of what is happening. The fleeting reaction of liking or disliking may not be strong and may not give much result, but the repeated reaction will develop into craving and aversion. That is thirst *taṇhā* irremediable dissatisfaction. When this longing and dissatisfying *taṇhā* becomes stronger and deeper, it will influence our thinking, our speech, and our action. That is the one which lead to deep suffering.

40. From the explanation given in the previous chapter, explaining *dukkha*, we have already acquired knowledge about the basic features of the five groups of existences, one material and four mental, which forms the objects of clingings. We also came to know that the Five Aggregates which make up the individual and *dukkha* are no two things.

41. Summing up the findings, it is quite clear that the cause or the germ of the arising of *dukkha*, is found in the Five Aggregates *pañcakkhandha*. As the Five Aggregates being *dukkha*, the cause of the arising of *dukkha*, is found in *dukkha* itself and not else where. So also the nature of the cessation of *dukkha*, can be found no where else, other than in *dukkha* itself "yam kiñci samudaya dhamam sabbam taṃ nirodha dhammam" (whatever is the nature of arising, all that is of the nature of cessation). So long as there is *taṇhā*, the circle of births *samsāra* will go on for ever. It can only be cut off through Wisdom (seeing the nature of things as they truly are).

42. On account of cause, effect comes to be. The driving force *taṇhā*, or the germ of the arising of *dukkha*, being the cause, if it ceases the effect must cease. This matter will make clear if we go through *paṭicca samuppāda* in

reverse order as:-

- (A) The cessation of **avijja** (ignorance) leads to the the cessation of **samkhara** (activities moral and immoral)
- (B) The cessation of **samkhara** leads to the cessation of **vinnana** (consciousness)
- (C) The cessation of **vinnana** leads to the cessation of **namarupam** (mental and physical phenomena, mind and matter)
- (D) The cessation of **namarupam** leads to the cessation of **salayatana**(the six faculties five physical sense organs and mind)
- (E) The cessation of **salayatana** leads to the cessation of **phassa** (sensorial and mental contact)
- (F) The cessation of **phassa** leads to the cessation of **vedana** (feelings, sensations)
- (G) The cessation of **vedana** leads to the cessation of **tanha** (craving, desire, greed, thirst)
- (H) The cessation of **tanha** leads to the cessation of **upadanam** (clinging, grasping)
- (I) The cessation of **upadanam** leads to the cessation of **bhava** (action, process of becoming)
- (J) The cessation of **bhava** leads to the cessation of **jati** (rebirth)
- (K) The cessation of **jati** leads to the cessation of **jara-marana**(decay, death, lamentation, pain, sorrow)

43. Thus the cessation of entire aggregate of sufferings encompassed by nescience result. When this nescience is turned into knowledge, that is Wisdom, the life flux is diverted into **Nibbanadhātu** and the end of the life process **samsara** comes about.

44. To emerge from sufferings, is to accept the reality of it, not as a philosophical concept or an article of faith. It is a fact of existence which affects each of us in our lives. With this acceptance and understanding of what suffering is and why we suffer, we can emerge from sufferings by learning to realize directly our own nature. Then only we can set ourselves on the path leading out of suffering.

45. The ways and means of turning nescience into knowledge i.e., to stop being driven to suffering will be discussed later on, in the chapter of the Fourth Noble Truth.

THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

N I R O D H A "dukkha nirodha ariyasacca"

1. The third Noble Truth **nirodha** is the cessation of sufferings the **dukkha** and it's term in Pali is **dukkha nirodha ariya sacca**.

2. It is the emancipation, the liberation, the freedom from sufferings, or from the continuity of **dukkha**. To eliminate **dukkha** completely, one has to eliminate the main root of it. **taṇha** (thirst, desire, greed etc:-) being the cause, or the main culprit of all the sufferings, what we need is to eliminate **taṇhā** or to make **taṇhā** extinct. The extinction of **taṇhā=taṇhākkhaya** is **Nibbāna**. Therefore **Nibbāna** is also known by the term **taṇhākkhaya**.

3. We need to explain what **Nibbāna** is. As the experience of **Nibbāna** is quite beyond the reach of almost all human beings and being not the fact of human experience, there cannot be words to express that experience. It can not be clarified completely and satisfactorily with words of human language, the real and true nature of what **Nibbāna** is.

4. Nevertheless, much has been written in many ways to clarify, but more and more confused. So to clarify briefly and in short form, we can only say that **Nibbāna** is Absolute Truth or Ultimate Reality.

5. If **Nibbāna** is to be expressed in positive terms, it is likely to associate the term which may be quite contrary to it. Therefore it is generally expressed in a less dangerous negative term as:-

- (A) **taṇhākkhaya** The meaning of it spread out to:-
- (1) the extinction of **tanha** (thirst).
 - (2) the complete cessation of the very **taṇhā**.
 - (3) the emancipation from the clutch of **taṇhā**.
 - (4) the renouncing of **taṇhā**.
 - (5) the calming of all conditioned things, giving up all defilements.

all of which amounts to the extinction of, detachment of, cessation of, **taṇhā** which is **Nabbāna**.

- (B) **asankhata** means, unconditioned and is absolute as-

- (1) **ragakkhavo** the extinction of desire.

(2) **dosakkhaya** the extinction of hatred.

(3) **mohakkhaya** the extinction of illusion.

all the above three being extinction of **tanhā** is **Nibbāna**.

(C) **viraga** means detachment from desire and craving that is:-

(1) free from conceit.

(2) destruction of thirst.

(3) uprooting of attachment.

(4) cutting off of continuity.

all of which being detachment and cessation of **tanhā** is **Nibbāna**.

(D) **nirodha** means:-

(1) extinction.

(2) Blown out.

(3) cessation.

all of which being the cessation of continuity or becoming **bhavanirodha** is **Nibbana**.

6. Referring to **Nibbana**, **Gotama Buddha** said that, there is liberation and cessation of sufferings. If there be not, there would be no ways and means of escape. Since there are ways and means of escape there certainly is liberation from the cessation of sufferings, which is **Nibbana**. Therefore in **Nibbana**, The Great Four Elements have no place. The notion of measurements, good and evil, name and form are altogether destroyed. Nothing such as sense organs or sense objects are to be found.

7. Because it is expressed in negative terms, some have wrong notion that **Nibbāna** is negative, and express that **Nibbana** is self annihilation of self. If at all it is only the illusion of false idea of self that is to be annihilated.

8. **Nibbana** is neither negative nor positive. The negative and positive are relative and within the realm of duality. It cannot be applied to **Nibbāna** or Absolute Truth or Ultimate Reality, which is beyond duality and relativity. So **Nibbāna** is free from all evil, cravings, hatred, ignorance and free from all terms of duality and relativity.

9. As shown in the **Dhatuvibhanga Sutta** of the **Majjhima Nikaya**, that **Gotama Buddha** in a brief encounter with an intelligent and earnest young recluse **Pukkusati** (the story of it is already mentioned in the introductory chapter of this Four Noble Truths,) delivered an extremely important discourse. In the discourse some idea of **Nibbana**

is shown and the essence of it is found in the relevant portions, which are as follows.

(A) Man,

- (1) he understands, is composed of the elements solidity, fluidity, heat, motion, space and consciousness.
- (2) he analyses them and finds that non is self.
- (3) he understands, consciousness as (pleasantness, unpleasantness and neutrality) sensations appears.
- (4) through this knowledge, his mind becomes detached and finds within him the picture of equanimity *upekkhā* which can direct towards the attainment of high spiritual state that will last for long.

(B) Man, he think that if purified and cleansed equanimity *upekkhā* be focussed on:-

- (1) the sphere of infinite space, *ākāsanincanna yatana jhana*.
 - (2) the sphere of infinite consciousness *vinñānincanna yatana jhana*.
 - (3) the sphere of nothingness *ākincanna yatana jhana*.
 - (4) the sphere of neither- perception nor non-perception *navasanna nasanna yatana jhana*.
- and develop a mind conforming there to, that is a mental creation *samkhata*.

(C) Man, with a pure equanimity, he does not cling to anything in the world. He neither mentally creates will to continuity and becoming, nor annihilation and knows that he:-

- (1) is not anxious.
 - (2) is completely calm within.
 - (3) is finished with births.
- and has lived, what he ought to be done, and that nothing more is left to be done.

(D) Man, when he experienced a pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral sensations, he knows that it is impermanent, does not bind with passion, and knows that those sensations will be pacified with the dissolution of the body.

(E) Therefore the person who has the full knowledge of the extinction of *dukkha* is endowed with, and has within him the absolute wisdom.

(F) That which is unreality *musadhamma* is false, that

which is reality **amusadhamma** is Truth **sacca**, Nibbāna. So a person who is endowed with this Absolute Truth is unshakable, for **Paramam Ariya saccam** Absolute Noble Truth is Nibbāna.

10. Else where, **Gotama Buddha** said, "I will teach you the Truth, the path leading to the Truth". Here **Gotama Buddha** used the word Truth in place of Nibbāna. Hence Truth definitely means Nibbāna.

11. To clarify absolute Truth, according to **Buddhism** there is nothing absolute in the world. Everything is related and conditioned and all are impermanent. There is no unchanging everlasting absolute substance within or without like (self) or (soul). The realization of these facts can only be termed Absolute Truth.

12. As Truth definitely means Nibbāna, the realization of Absolute Truth consequently means to see things as they are **yathābhūtam**. The illusion or ignorance is **avijjā**, the extinction of cravings **tanhākkhaya** and the cessation of sufferings **nirodha** are Nibbāna.

13. Some think Nibbāna is the natural result of the extinction of craving. If so Nibbāna would be **sankhata** produced and conditioned. Nibbāna and Truth is neither cause nor effect. It is not the product or the conditioned one like a mystic, spiritual, a mental states as **jhana samādhi**. The only thing is there is Truth, there is Nibbāna and what you need to do is to see it and to realize it.

14. There is a path **magga** leading to the realization of Nibbāna, but the Nibbāna is not the result of the path **magga**. For example:-

- (A) You may get to a mountain along a path, but the mountain is not the result of the path.
- (B) you may see a light, but the light is not the result of the eyesight.

15. People often ask "What is there after Nibbāna?" As Nibbāna is the Ultimate Truth, there can be nothing after it. If there be something after Nibbāna that would be the Ultimate Truth and not Nibbāna.

16. Once **Radha** a monk asked **Gotama Buddha** "for what purpose there is Nibbāna?" The question amounts to the same as above. It presume there is something in Nibbāna. **Gotama Buddha** pointed out that one lives a holy life aiming Nibbāna as its final plunge into the Absolute Truth, as

its goal, as its ultimate end.

17. The passing away of Gotama Buddha is popularly denoted by a phrase expression as "Gotama Buddha entered into Nibbana". The phrase may give rise to take and imagine Nibbana to be a realm where there are some sort of living beings. The learned explains that there is no such equivalent term in the original Pali Text. As tathāgatas (Buddhas in general) and arahants had completely destroyed and uprooted all defilements and impurities and never rise again. Parinibbāna, or parinibuto the term of the demise of Buddhas simply means "fully passed away" or "fully blown out" or "fully extinct".

18. There is another question, "If there is no 'I' or 'self' or 'soul', who realizes Nibbāna?". The answer will be:-

- (A) It is the thought that thinks, there is no thinker behind the thought.
- (B) It is wisdom panna, that realizes realization, there is no other 'I', or 'self', or 'soul', that realizes behind the realization.
- (C) Whether being or thing or system, if it is of the nature of arising, it has within itself the nature or the germ of cessation or its destruction.
- (D) If dukkha, saṃsāra, the cycle of continuity is of the nature of arising, it must be of the nature of cessation.
- (E) dukkha arises because of tanhā (thirst) and it ceases because of wisdom panna, tanhā and panna are both within the Five Aggregates.
- (F) Buddha postulated that the world loka is within the sentient body (the body having to have feelings and experiencing sensations) so also the cessation of the world, the path leading to the cessation of the world, are within. It means that the Four Noble Truths are founded within the Five Aggregates, that is within ourselves.

19. Therefore there is no external power that produces the arising and the cessation of dukkha.

20. In almost every religion, it is said that the attainment of the highest stage can be achieved only after death. In Buddhism Nibbāna can be realized in this life time. It is not necessary to wait till death.

21. Words cannot convey the true nature, and language is considered deceptive and misleading. Even a simple word happiness is ambiguous when used to describe Nibbāna.

Sariputta once said Nibbana is happiness. When Upali asked "what happiness can it be, if there is no sensation in Nibbana?" Sariputta replied that "No sensation itself is happiness." The reply is highly philosophical and beyond ordinary comprehension.

22. However we need not waste our precious time, engaging in vain intellectual past-time in high speculative discussions, taxing with puzzling and high sounding words regarding Nibbāna. For there is a word *paccatam veditabbo viññūhi* which means Nibbāna is to be realized by the wise within themselves.

23. So the forces which feverishly produced the continuity of *samsāra*, can be retarded and gradually come to an end. No more illusion, no more thirst capable of producing *kammic* formation, if we only cultivate to develop ethic, moral, wisdom and follow earnestly and patiently the path *magga* leading to Nibbāna, shown in the Fourth Noble Truth (the next to be discussed), we may realize Nibbāna before we die.

24. He who realize Nibbana,

- (A) Is the happiest being in the world.
- (B) Is free from all complexes and obsessions, the worries and troubles that torment.
- (C) Has his perfect mental health.
- (D) Does not repent the past nor brood over the future, appreciates and enjoys in the present without self projections, lives fully in the present.
- (E) Is joyful, exultant, enjoy the pure life free from anxiety, serene and peaceful.
- (F) Is free from self desire, hatred, ignorance, conceit, pride, and such defilements.
- (G) Is pure and gentle, full of universal love, compassion, kindness, sympathy, understanding and tolerance.
- (H) Has no thought of self, and his services to others is purest.
- (I) He gains nothing, accumulates nothing, not even spiritual, because he is free from the illusion of self and the thirst for becoming.

THE FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH

M A G G A

"Dukkha nirodha gamini patipada ariya sacca"
"the path leading to the cessation of dukkha"

1. The fourth noble truth is that of the way leading to the cessation of dukkha. (dukkha nirodha gamini patipada ariyasacca).

2. Gotama Buddha finding the way out of universal sufferings, firstly experienced the two extremes which he found to be unwholesome and unworthy. The invaluable experiences of the two extremes what Gotama Buddha experienced are:-

(A) **Self-indulgence.** The search for happiness through senses pleasure, the worthy path most people follow. There is no one whose desires are always fulfilled. People suffer when they fail to achieve. Even if their desire be fulfilled, they suffer from fear that their attainments will vanish. In attaining or in missing people always remain agitated. Following this path is not the way to real lasting happiness.

(B) **Self-restraint.** The search for happiness through self-motification, a physical austerity, deliberately refraining from self-desire. If self-restraint be a kind of self-control it would be preferable to self-indulgence, for one would avoid immorality. Asceticism in fact is self-punishment. Punishing self is not the way of purifying the mind. It will increase mental tension and all the suspended desires will accumulate behind the bars of self-desire and is liable to erupt any moment. It is also not the way to real lasting happiness.

3. The result achieved by following the two extremes are not to his imperious demand. Having found them to be undesirable, Gotama Buddha abandoned the two extremes and discovered through his endeavours the middle path (majjhima patipada), the (magga path), which gives vision and knowledge, and which leads to calm, insight, enlightenment, The Nibbāna.

4. This middle path or magga path is composed of the following eight categories, or divisions, or factors, and

is generally referred to as The Noble Eight fold path (ariya-atthangika-magga):-

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| (A) Right understanding | (samma ditthi) |
| (b) Right thought | (samma sankappa) |
| (c) Right speech | (samma vaca) |
| (D) Right action | (samma kamanta) |
| (E) Right livelihood | (samma ajiva) |
| (F) Right effort | (samma vayama) |
| (G) Right mindfulness | (samma sati) |
| (H) Right concentration | (sammā samādhi) |

5. The eight categories, or divisions, or factors of The Noble Eightfold Path are all linked together and each helps the cultivation of the other. They are to be developed more or less simultaneously as far as possible. It should not be practiced and followed one after another in the numerical order as shown above.

6. Buddhist training and discipline, aim at promoting and perfecting the three essentials, viz:-

- (A) Ethical conduct or Morality (sila), which concerns with the cultivation of moral conducts.
- (B) Mental discipline (samādhi), which concerns with the culture of mind.
- (C) Wisdom (paññā), which concerns to constitute wisdom.

7. The eight categories, or divisions, or factors of The Noble Eight fold paths is coherently grouped under the above mentioned three heads as:-

- (A) Ethical conduct or morality (sila)
 - (1) Right speech (samma vasa)
 - (2) Right action (samma kammanta)
 - (3) Right livelihood (samma ajiva)
- (B) Mental disciplins or concentration (samadhi)
 - (1) Right effort (samma vayama)
 - (2) Right mindfulness (sammā sati)
 - (3) Right concentration (sammā samādhi)
- (C) Wisdom (panna)
 - (1) Right understanding (samma ditthi)
 - (2) Right thought (samma sankappa)

8. To live accordingly as a perfect Buddhist, there are two qualities one should develop. The two qualities are:-

- (A) Compassion (Karunā), which represents love, charity, kindness, tolerance, and such noble quali-

tics on the emotional side, or the qualities of the heart.

(B) **Wisdom (paññā)**, which would stand for the intellectual or the qualities of mind.

To become a perfect Buddhist one has to develop the two qualities **Compassion** and **Wisdom** equally, for:-

(A) if he develop only the emotional and neglect intellectual, he may become a good-hearted fool.

(B) if he develop only the intellectual and neglect emotional he may become a hard hearted intellectual, without feeling for others.

10. Therefore **Compassion** and **Wisdom** are inseparably linked together.

The three Categories of The Noble Eightfold Path Regarding Ethical Conduct.

(sammā vacā, sammā kammanta and sammā ājivā)

11. **Sila** is the practice of abstention from all unwholesome actions. One who wish to practice the practical way **dhamma**, must begin with observing **sila**, without which one cannot advance. To avoid disruption society requires abstention from all action (words and deeds) that harm others. In fact we abstain from such actions because the wrongfull deeds also harm ourselves. There are three main aspects of observing **sila**.

(A) Without generating great craving and aversion, it is impossible to commit crime. The consequence of crime is immediate unhappiness and more in the future. Whereas virtuous person is happy now and rejoices hereafter. When we commit unwholesome actions we experience the hell-fire within ourselves, and when we perform unwholesome deeds we experience the heaven of inner peace. We need not wait hell and haven untill after dead. We abstain from unwholesome words and deeds, not only for the benifit of others, but also for our own good. This is the first aspect of observing **sila**.

(B) To gain insight into the depths of our reality, requires a very calm and quite mind, free from agitation. Whenever one commits unwholesome action, the mind is inundated with agitation. When one abstain unwholesome action, his mind become peacefull enough so that introspection may proceed. This is the second aspect of observing

sila.

- (C) One who follow the practical way **dhamma**, is to stride towards the liberation from all sufferings. While performing, he cannot be involved in any action that will reinforce the very mental habit he seeks to eradicate. Committing unwholesome action will intensify cravings and aversions **tanha**, which will inevitably be hindering the process towards the goal. To shun the hindrances in the process is the third aspect of observing **sila**.

12. The exposition just to abstain unwholesome deeds and exercise wholesome ones is simple, clear and acceptable. Everyone would agree that we should avoid harmful action and perform those are beneficial. It seems easy but when we try, we rely on our views, our traditional beliefs, our preferences and prejudices. As one man's meat may be another man's poison, we consequently produce narrow sectarian definitions, that are acceptable to some whereas unfeasible to many others.

13. Instead of such misinterpretation, **Gotama Buddha** offered an universal definition of piety and sin that:- any action that harm others, that disturb other's peace and harmony, is an unwholesome, a sinful action. Any action that help others, that contribute to other's peace and harmony, is wholesome a pious action.

14. Ethical conduct or morality **sila** is based on love and compassion, the aims and objects of it is not necessarily for the good of society, but the good of each one who observes. Not only for the worldly good, but also for his progress on the path of **dhamma**, the practical way.

15. **Right Speech (samma vasa)**. This category is the teaching for putting us into harmony with our surroundings for establishing a proper ecology of mind, so that we are in accord with others and the environment. How we relate to others and environments depends on our speech.

- (A) Speech must be pure and wholesome. Purity is achieved by removing impurities. We must understand what constitutes in impure speech, and abstain from:-

- (1) telling lies and to speak only the truth,
- (2) backbiting and slander talk, that may bring about hatred, enmity, disunity, disharmony among individuals, or group of people (to use only the words that is friendly, benevol-

ent, pleasant, gentle, meaningful, honest and helpful, which will create a vibration of peace and harmony),

(3) harsh, rude, impolite, malicious and abusive languages, (to speak carefully),

(4) idle, useless, foolish, and babble gossips, (to speak only at the right time right place).

(If one can not mention properly or useful and meaningful words, or if it be undesirable to speak, one should keep noble silence).

(B) One who practice right speech:-

(1) Speaks only the truth. Is steadfast in truthfulness, trustworthy, dependable, and straight forward with friends.

(2) Reconciles the quarrellings and encourages the united, by his words.

(3) Delights in harmony, seeks after harmony, and creates harmony by his words.

(4) Speaks words which are gentle, pleasing, kind, heart-warming, courteous, agreeable, and enjoyable to many.

(5) Speaks at the proper time according to the facts, according to what is helpful, according to dhamma and the code of conduct.

(6) Speaks words which are worth remembering, well-reasoned, well-chosen and constructive.

16. Right Action (sammā kammanta). This category is the teaching not to inflict pain or to minimize the amount of pain we inflict on other beings. We are not always able to see the far reaching consequences of our acts. To emanate peace, we should take care, not to create disturbance to the environs. This category teaches us to maintain honourable and peaceful conduct and it admonishes:-

(A) to refrain from:-

(1) destroying life,

(2) stealing (not to take what is not given),

(3) illegitimate sexual immorality, (in this context, our daily life can be most basically understood as not causing sufferings to others, out of greed or desire for pleasant sensations),

(4) false speech (which causes only harm),

(5) intoxicants (which causes, losing one's sense so that one does not know what one says or does).

- (B) to help others;-
- (1) to lead a peaceful and honourable life,
 - (2) to be careful to harm non,
 - (3) to be full of kindness,
 - (4) to be seeking, the good of all living creatures.
- (C) To cleanse are mind. We have clearly seen that volition is mental construction, mental activity, and its function is to direct the mind to do good or bad. Having will to do under the direction of that volition, action comes orderly in succession as mind, speech and bodily. Good volition directs to do good and bad volition directs to do bad. So we need to:-
- (1) Try hard not to let bad volition enter your mind.
 - (2) Try hard to drive out or push out the bad volition which had already entered into your mind.
 - (3) Invite good volitions to come into your mind.
 - (4) Make better and better the good volitions which have already entered into your mind.

17. Right Livelihood (sammā ājivā). This category teaches us to make a living by honourable, blameless and harmless profession, making a living, which is doing work for support and maintenance, involves our relationship in the world.

- (A) As it is part of the ethical conduct, it is somewhat connected with the former two, the Right Speech and the Right Action. So as to become a successful professional Right Speech is necessary and Right Action plays a greater part.
- (B) Human beings, mostly are misunderstandable. Wisdom and understanding need to be integrated into our lives. As has already been seen, that action is done under the direction of volition, work done in cohesion with Right Speech and Right Action and under the direction of good volition will always be in harmony with Right Livelihood.
- (C) Each human being is a member of society, we meet our obligation to society by the work we do, serving our fellows in different ways. Even a Saṅgha yahan has his proper work of purifying his mind for his good and the benefit of all in return of the alms he received. If one starts exploiting others by deceiving people, he or even a

Sangha yahan is not practicing Right Livelihood samma ajiva.

- (D) Whatever emoluments in cash or kind we are given in return for our work, it is to be used for the support of ourselves and our dependents. If there be any excess one should try to return a possible portion of it to society, given to be used for the good of others. Then only the work done is Right Livelihood samma ajiva which is to support one self and to help others.
- (E) Anyway, it is pointed out that the following five professions oppose the right livelihood and is strictly prohibited.
- (1) Professions that bring harm to human beings, such as trading by cheating, earning a living by keeping brothel and profiting from domestic servants' earnings,
 - (2) Trading by killing animals,
 - (3) Dealing with poison and poisonous drugs,
 - (4) Selling arms and lethal weapons,
 - (5) Distributing intoxicants.

18. Right speech, Right action and Right livelihood which constitute Ethical conduct or morality sila, aims at promoting a happy and harmonious life, both for the individual and for the society. It is the basic or the first stage or an integral part and an indispensable foundation for all higher spiritual attainments, which goes along the path to Nibbāna. Development can never be possible without this ethical conduct or morality sila. The elementary principles of regulated behaviours are essential along the path to Nibbāna. Without it there can be no progress on the path, because the mind will remain too agitated to investigate the reality within. Violation of them will be obstacles and observance of these will be a smooth and steady progress along the path, securing a firm footing on the ground of morality sila. The progressing pilgrim then embarks upon the higher practice of samadhi.

The Three Categories of The Noble Eightfold Path Regarding Mental discipline.

(samma vayama, samma sati and samma samādhi)

19. Intellectually, we understand that it is wrong to commit unwholesome actions and we control our speech and physical activities by practicing morality sila. However the cause of sufferings lies in our mental actions. Mere restraining over words and deeds is not enough. If the

mind continues to boil in craving and aversion, sooner or later when temptation comes and over powers the mind, craving and aversion *tanha* will erupt and we shall break *sila* harming ourselves and others as well.

20. It becomes easy to refrain from unwholesome words and deeds only when one learns to cease committing unwholesome mental actions. To have that mental attitude, one need a method to train the mind. The method is meditation which in Buddhist term is *bhavana* a mental culture or mental exercise for focussing and purifying the mind. It is the wholesome action of learning to take control of the process of mental activities i.e., to cleanse the mind of impurities and disturbances. To become master of one's own mind is concentration *samadhi*, when observed rightly can obtain Wisdom *panna*.

21. The three categories or the three factors of The Noble Eightfold Path which comes under this Mental Discipline or training of concentration are to train, to discipline and to develop the mind to gain higher attainments. *Samadhi* is one pointedness of mind or the control and culture of the mind. In other words, it is the concentration of the mind on one object to the entire exclusion of all other irrelevant matters. Just as the Ethical conduct or morality is an indispensable foundation, these three factors are essentially needed to gain wisdom.

22. Right Effort (*samma vayama*). This category teaches us to use one's effort rightly, that is to work till the end with full determination.

(A) Effort being the root, the foundation of all achievements and tenseness and consciousness being a great hindrance, we have to relax and balance our mind with tranquility and perseverance. Right Effort *samma vayama* is the first step in the practice of meditation which in Buddhist term is *bhavana*.

(B) The first to perform in the practice of *bhavana* is to stabilize the mind. The mind can easily overcome by ignorance, easily swayed by craving and aversion. Somehow or other we must straightened or strengthen our mind to be fixed and firm and maintain it on a single object of attention, for examining the reality of ourselves. This exercise is the preliminary stage of observing *bhavana*.

(C) To keep our mind fixed on a particular thing is really a difficult task. Whenever we try to keep

our mind fixed on one thing, we begin to worry about something. As soon as we try to suppress the distracting thought, a thousand thought jumps into our mind, such as memories, plans, hopes, fears etc. When one of them catches our attention, we totally forget the initially fixed attention.

(D) This is the ingrained habit of our mind which has been doing throughout our life. Such a consistent or afflicted habit of our mind can not be change all of a sudden or in a short interval. It may require strenuous exercise to bring back the wavering mind to the initially fixed attention. What we need is to practice patiently, calmly and without attention. If we fail (surely it will at the beginning), without discouragement and disappointment we must try again and again until we succeed. This is Right Effort **sammā vayama**.

(E) As every action is done through mind, mouth and body under the direction of volition, in explaining Right Effort we will have to give the similar advice given in explaining Right Action. That we are to;-

(1) prevent evil, and unwholesome state of mind from arising.

(2) get rid of such evil and unwholesome state of mind, that has arisen.

(3) produce, cause, arise, good and wholesome state of mind, that has not yet arisen.

(4) develop and bring to perfection the good and wholesome state of mind, that is already present.

and to use effort rightly.

23. **Right Mindfulness (sammā sati)**. This category teaches us the ways and means of balancing the mind or setting up of the wavering mind to be serene, steady and tranquil, and take heed to bring about the gradual development of mind which is mental culture or mental development. This is the second stage or the advancing stage of observing **bhavana**.

(A) Every mental and physical phenomenon of a human being can only be explained by the five order or process of **niyama**, which separate the mental and physical realms, by the all embracing order of processes of each of the five **niyama**, which are the laws in themselves. The five **niyama** are:-

(1) **Kamma** **niyama** order of act and result. e.g., desirable and undesirable acts produce corr-

- esponding good and bad results.
- (2) **Utu niyama** physical inorganic order. e.g., seasonal phenomena of winds and rains .
 - (3) **Bija niyama** physical organic order. e.g., rice is produced from paddy; sweet taste is produced from sugarcane and honey; cells and genes and the physical similarity of twins may be ascribed to this order.
 - (4) **Citta niyama** order of mind and psychic law. e.g., processes of consciousness, power of mind etc.
 - (5) **Dhamma niyama** order of norm, the natural phenomenon e.g., the natural phenomenal occurings as gravatation, fire is hot and should burn, water seeks its own level, the ordinary laws of nature the independent agency which operates in its own without the intervention of an external law given.
- (B) According to Buddhism mind is nothing but a complex compound of fleeting mental states. If one unit of consciousness be given as a thought moment, in a thought moment consists the following three phases or stages as:-
- (1) **uppāda** arising or genesis phase.
 - (2) **thīti** static or devoelopment phase.
 - (3) **bhaṅga** cessation or desolution phase.
- (C) Immediately after the cessation of one unit or a thought moment there occurs another thought moment, starting from genesis stage on to static or development stage ending with cessation or dissolution stage consecutively and proceed on to another thought moment and so on.
- (D) The fleeting mental states of consciousness is like a flesh of lightening, that resolved into a succession of sparks, flowing one upon another, with such repidity that human retina can not catch the glimpse of it.
- (E) Such a continuous flux of men's mind occurs through the following four main sections or status viz:
- (1) **kāya** that deals with body.
 - (2) **vedanā** that deals with sensations or feelings.
 - (3) **citta** that deals with mind.
 - (4) **dhamma** that deals with various moral and intellectual subjects which are ideas, thoughts conceptions and things.

As the continuous flux of men's mind occurs through the four main section, to set up mindfulness and attentiveness of the mind, one has to pay continuous attention, eminently and diligently on the condition of the four main sections. The method of paying attention of the four main sections is **bhāvanā**.

(F) Here we need to consider some facts about the cause and effects and about **kamma** what we have discussed in the chapter of The Second Noble Truths that:-

- (1) Cause produces effects; the effects explains the cause.
- (2) Happiness and misery are the result of our own inherited pass actions and our present deeds. We are the architect of our own fate.
- (3) **Kamma** means action, but it's ultimate sense is meritorious and demeritorious volitional action, which constitutes both good and evil. Good begets good and evil begets evil. We are the result of what we were, will be the result of what we are. A criminal can be a saint tomorrow.

(G) All our suffering stems of ignorance is the reaction of our mind, because we do not know the reality of ourselves; because we do not know what we are doing. Our mind spends most of the time lost in fantasies and illusions, reliving experiencing pleasantness and unpleasantness and anticipating the future with eagerness and fear. Lost in such cravings and aversions, we are unaware of what we are doing. The past has gone and the future is forever beyond our grasp. We can neither live in the past nor in the future. The most important for us is this moment (now), that we can live. What we need to do is to be aware of what we are doing now.

(H) In explaining Right Effort **sammā vayama** we came to know that we are to use effort rightly to get our wavering mind back to the fixed particular object so as to exercise Right Mindfulness or Awareness **sammā sati**. By the explanations given above we came to know the same understanding that we are to be aware of the present. Such kind of awareness, awaring only what we are doing now, will not do. This category teaches us to be carefull, that the present activities be done under meritorious volition **kusalū cetanā** and by observing **sila**. This is Right Mindfulness **sammā**

sati.

24. **Right concentration (samma samadhi).** It is the third and the last of the three factors under the head of Mental Discipline which are the teachings concerning the culture and development of the mind. It is the training of mindfully fixing attention, or the training awareness of our moment to moment performances, so that no evil deeds occur.

- (A) As concentration is required to accomplish a task, people concentrate on satisfying a sensual or forestalling a fear. A hunter with all his attention fixed on his prey to get his hunt; a pick-pocket is intent on the victim's wallet for the moment to remove it; a child in bed fearfully stares at the darkest corner imagining a monster may come out. Although each of them are keeping their attention fixed on the present moment with unbroken mindfulness, none of those can be **samādhi**. It must have his attention fixed on the object with the intention free from all cravings and aversions.
- (B) We have known that cravings and aversions occur due to sensation **vedanā** which is formed by the contact of six sense elements **kamaguna**, five physical **kāyika** and one psychic **cetasika** with the corresponding objects in the external world. There are various forms of **vedanā** but are classified only into three categories viz;- pleasant **sukha**, unpleasant **dukkha**, and neutral **adukkhamasukha**. Like visitors all are varied and diverse, arises and passes away that **vedanā** becomes the subject of the three characteristics of **tilakkhanā**, the impermanence **anicca**, the substancelessness **anattā** and the suffering **dukkha**.
- (C) All beings prefer **sukha** to **dukkha**. Naturally people look forward to obtain only **sukha**. **Vedanā** being associations of contact of six sense elements **kamaguna** and the outer world, both layman and a meditator obtain **sukha** through the same contact. When compared, **sukha** obtained by a meditator is by far the more. To obtain such, a meditator has to overcome many difficulties. Despite a meditator's firm determination to have **samādhi**, his mind slips away forgetting his fixed attention. Like a drunken man, his mind followed along the everchanging, wavering mind straying into past or future, drunken with ignorance and illusion, unable to remain on the straight path

of sustained awareness.

- (D) We should not be depressed or discouraged to confront with such difficulties. It takes time to change the ingrained mental habit of years. What we need is, to return our attention back again and again as soon as we notice that it has strayed. Trying this, is establishing **samma vayama**. If we succeed, we then have taken an important step towards changing our wandering mind to sustain awareness. That is establishing **samma sati**. To have such periods we need, bringing the attention back again and again. Repeated practice makes easy and more quickly in bringing back the attention. By the by, the period of sustain awareness becomes longer and longer. Such periods of sustain awareness is the periods of concentration **samadhi** and the practice of which is **samatha** or **samadhi bhavana**.
- (E) Some of those while practicing **bhavana** may have various, unusual extrasensory experiences as seeing lights, or visions, or having extraordinary sound. There are countless extra sensory experiences to be had. Those are mere milestones, that mark the heightened level of concentration. One would enjoy or obtain such extrasensory experiences, they occur in some case and not in other, for some may be so intent on the path striding ahead without noticing it.
- (F) Along the path which leads finally to the realization of Truth, the Nibbāna, there are various status of absorption or trance, the high mystic attainments **jhāna** to be obtain. The attainable **jhāna** are of following eight stages.
- (1) **The First Stage of jhana.** In this stage one is free from passionate desire, unwholesome thoughts which hinders the realization of Truth such as lustful desire, ill-will, hatred or anger, torpor and languer, restlessness, worry, and skeptical doubt are discarded, only the feeling of joy and happiness are maintained along with certain mental activities.
 - (2) **The Second Stage of jhana.** In this stage all intellectual activities are suspended. Tranquility and one pointedness of mind developed. Feeling of joy and happiness still retained.
 - (3) **The Third Stage of jhana.** In this stage the feeling of joy, which is an active sensation also disappears, while the disposition of happiness still remains in addition with

mindful equanimity.

- (4) **The Fourth State of jhana.** In this stage all sensations, even happiness, unhappiness, joy and sorrow disappears, only pure equanimity and awareness remains.
 - (5) **The Fifth Absorption.** "pincama jhana" or "akasaninsanna yatana jhāna". In this state with the purified and cleansed equanimity "upekkha" he focussed on the sphere of infinite space "akasa" and developed a mind conforming thereto.
 - (6) **The Sixth Absorption.** "chattama jhana" or "vinnanincanna yatana jhana". In this stage with the purified and cleansed equanimity "upekkha" he focussed on the sphere of consciousness and developed a mind conforming thereto.
 - (7) **The Seventh Absorption.** "sattama jhana" or "akincanna yatana jhāna". In this stage with the purified and cleansed equanimity "upekkha" he focussed on the sphere of nothingness "akinca" and developed a mind conforming thereto.
 - (8) **The Eighth Absorption.** "atthama jhana" or "nevasanna nassanna yatana jhana". In this stage with the purified and cleansed equanimity "upekkha" he focussed on the sphere of neither perception "sanna" nor non-perception "nasanna" and calmly developed a mind conforming thereto.
- (G) Gotama Buddha's teachings, concerning culture and development of mind, found in these three factors of the Eightfold Mega Path is shown not only to know, but it is taught, encouraged and stimulated, for each individual to follow and practice, so that he may develop and liberate himself from all bondages.
- (H) Meditation, which is mental culture or mental development in Buddhist term is bhāvana. The full sense of the term aims at cleansing the mind of impurities and disturbances, leading finally to the high wisdom, which sees the nature of things as they truly are and realize the Ultimate Reality, Absolute Truth, the Nibbāna.
- (I) There are two forms of meditations "Samatha or Samadhi bhavanā" and "Vipassana bhavana".
- (1) "Samatha or Samadhi bhāvana". It is the development of mental concentration or one pointedness of mind. There are various methods leading to the mystic state or trance

such as beginning from the basic stage "the First Absorption on the first of jhāna" up to the Eighth Absorption "the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception" (Nava saññā nāsaññā yatana jhāna).

- (2) "**Vipassana bhāvanā**". It is the mental culture an analytical method based on mindfulness, awareness, vigilance, observance, which is insight into the nature of things, leading to the complete liberation of mind and to the realization of Ultimate Truth, the Nibbāna.
- (J) "**Samatha or Samādhi bhavana**" existed long time before Gotama Buddha. It is interesting that Gotama Buddha prior to His enlightenment had taken up those practices, mastered and attained all the eight absorptions in no time. He abandoned after finding the result of those practices to be mind-created, mind produced, conditioned (saṃkhata), and by his own striven virtues discovered the other form "**Vipassanā bhāvanā**". Following the way he ultimately attained the most highest stage of Samādhi the "sannavedayita nirodha" which is the stage beyond mind and matter "Nama and Rupa", beyond perception and sensation "saññā and vadenā" which is the highest "sukha" that is eternal, the correct way of seeing Reality, The Truth, The Nibbāna.
- (K) Hence "**Samatha or Samādhi bhāvanā**" is not pure Buddhist meditation, whereas "**Vipassanā bhāvanā**" only is an essential Buddhist Meditation. Although the means are not the way to find liberation, the mystic states attained by the practice of "**Samatha or Samādhi bhāvanā**" being considered as a happy and peaceful living in this existence, and which may even lead to the practice of "**Vipassanā bhāvanā**", it is not excluded from the field of Buddhist meditation.
- (L) The countless extrasensory experiences and also the blissful state of trances gives relaxation, calmness of mind and tranquility, to those who attained. The attainments are not arisen spontaneously from the depths of purified mind. They are created and superimposed. All are mental creations. Neither of the attainments are final goal for a meditator seeking means of eradicating "dukkha". One should not cling to. Clinging to the enjoyments may retard or may even cease making progress altogether.
- (M) How can we, shun away or let go such a bliss

deservingly attained ? How can we, not to live without appreciating and enjoy such hard earned happiness ? Very simple and easy advice is to examine all sensations "vedanā" without reacting.

(N) The advice seems simple and easy enough but practically it would not be so. The entire Universe is filled with countless objects. It will not be possible to prevent the contact of those with our sensory basis where sensation "vedanā" is bound to be. The unconscious mind will overpower the consciousness and will react with liking and disliking, and multiplying will intensify into great craving and aversion "taṇhā". To examine "vedanā" without reacting is to observe it with equanimity. The attainable "sukha" in the states of absorptions, being a great temptation, to exercise such a way, one needs great courage, i.e., will to do, and thorough understanding as well.

(O) To have a thorough understanding of the reality, one needs to know is, what mind and matter "nama and rupa" is, and also the clear knowledge of the three characteristics "tilakkhaṇa" (the impermanence 'anicca', the substancelessness 'anatta' and the suffering 'dukkha') is .

(1) Sub-atomic particles, which the body is composed of, arises and passes away every moment. The mental functionings also appear and disappear one after another. Every particle of our body and every process of mind is in continuous flux, that there is no hard core to which one can cling to. This is the picture what "anicca" is.

(2) There is no permanent "self" or "ego". The "ego" which one is so devoted is the creation of mental and physical process which are in a continuous flux. No immutable core, no essence that remain independent. This is the picture of what "anatta" is.

(3) All are being impermanent and substanceless, and all things are subject to change. passionate desire to that something impermanent or attachment to that something impermanent, when passes away, one suffers. That is the meaning of "dukkha".

Only through understanding the reality can develop a balanced mind or equanimity "upekkha" and observe sensation without reacting.

(P) When one can observe the sensation without reacting there will be no chance to develop into

craving and aversion "taṇha", where the mind will remain balanced and peaceful, maintaining equanimity. Such is the period where one is exercising Right Concentration "Samma Samādhī". Perhaps at the beginning the periods may be intermissive or intermittent split seconds, while the rest of the time the mind remains as it was before, in the old habit of reacting to sensations. With repeated practice only, the periods of Right Concentration "Samma Samādhī", can become longer.

- (Q) The extra sensory experiences, and even the states of trance up to the Eight Absorption are still within the field of sensory experience i.e., reacting to sensations. They are only milestones or indications which function only as stepping stones on the path to the ultimate goal which is beyond all sensory experiences. "Samma Samādhī" developed by a meditator is not to experience such bliss or ecstasy but to forge the mind to an instrument to examine reality, to develop wisdom and to remove the cause of suffering.

The Two Categories of The Noble Eightfold Path Regarding Wisdom. "Samma Ditthi and Samma Sankappa"

25. The remaining two factors of the Noble Eightfold Path which comes under this head deals with wisdom. Wisdom in Pali is "Panna". If "Panna" be analysed it is derived from the root "na" which means "to know" prefixed by "pa" meaning "correctly". Thus the translation becomes "to know correctly", and the commonly used equivalent words are insight, knowledge, wisdom.

26. We have already known that "Sila" is abstention from all unwholesome actions of body, speech and mind; and that "Samādhī" is developing the ability to consciously directs and controls one's own mental progress. We came to know also that "Sila" is the first step or an integral part to step on to the path proceeding towards the complete liberation from suffering, where "Samadhi" can be achieved. We have also been cautioned not to hold tight to the attainable bliss what "Samadhi" can give, and had been given advice to hone or sharpen our mind to strengthen "Samadhi", so that we will be able to step on to develop Wisdom "Panna". "Panna" is the final portion of the way to liberation is to be used in seeing things accordingly to reality.

27. "Paññā" may be defined precisely as "seeing things as

they really are and not as they appear to be". The characteristics of "panna" is to penetrate into the true nature of things. Its function is to dispel the darkness of ignorance, and to prevent one from being bewildered by its manifestation. Its immediate cause is concentration "Samādhi". It is evidently clear that-> he, whose mind is clear and concentrated, knows and sees things accordingly to reality.

28. "Sila" and "Samādhi" are no unique to the teaching of Gotama Buddha. Both were well known and practiced before His enlightenment. All religions, insisted on the necessity of moral behaviour "Sila", and also offered the possibility of obtaining state of bliss, the ecstasy by various forms of maintaining "Samādhi". Gotama Buddha, before realizing the existence of the unconscious mind, practiced and reached the highest attainable state of bliss, the deep absorption, the goal of such practice.

29. Although such practice confer great bliss, it calms the mind, only by diverting attention from the situation which one would otherwise react. Instead of eliminating the cause and conditionings of cravings and aversions "tanhā", it pushes the roots of problems, the impurities deep into the unconscious mind, where they remain dormant.

30. Like sleeping volcano, which is liable to erupt any moment, or like a felled tree, bound to sprout out new shoots, the suspended negativity, the underlying habit of "tanhā" (the impurities), the roots of problems, buried in the depths of unconscious mind be kept unrooted. The very impulse of performing unwholesome deeds, the indulgence in unwholesome actions, will always be in danger. There can be no everlasting happiness, no liberation.

31. To remove the impurities from the depths of the unconscious mind, one need to deal with it. To deal with the causes and conditionings of "tanhā", one is required to penetrate into the depths of the unconscious mind, where they remain suppressed or buried. Gotama Buddha in continuing His search for the way out of sufferings, found out a way or method to explore within his own nature, in order to deal with the cause and conditionings of "tanhā" suspended in the unconscious mind.

32. The way or method he found out is the training of Wisdom "Panna" which is "Vipassana bhavana". "Passana" is vision, the ordinary sort of seeing and "Vi" is special, when two combined becomes special sort of seeings. When emphasized it expressedly or in a total sense means

introspection, or penetration into the reality or exploring within. Summing up, the meaning of "**Vipassana bhavana**" amounts to developing Wisdom "**Panna**". To explore into the inner world of one's body will be a difficult task unless Wisdom is developed.

33. "**Vipassana bhavana**" the development of Wisdom "**Panna**" is **Gotama Buddha**'s discovery, what he practiced, which led Him to enlightenment, what he thought other, and what he left for us to follow. It is the unique of His teachings to which He gave the highest importance. Although "**Sila**" and "**Samadhi**" are no unique to the teachings of **Gotama Buddha**, they are indispensable and are of great value; for without "**Sila**" and "**Samadhi**", Wisdom "**Panna**", cannot be sought. By observing "**Sila**" we avoid unwholesome deeds which cause mental agitation. By maintaining "**Samadhi**" we calm our mind to develop Wisdom "**Panna**", with which to introspect our own true nature, penetrating deep into the reality (insight), and free ourselves of all ignorance and attachments.

34. Right understanding "**Sama ditthi**"

- (A) It is, to understand rightly, or in other words without doubt, inclination, or wavering, to understand a thing as they really are.
- (B) Right understanding is the key-note of Buddhism. It is the highest wisdom, the guide, pointing the way to see the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute Truth, the Nibbana.
- (C) In the Noble Eightfold Path, this Right understanding stands at the beginning and as well as its end. Minimum degree of right understanding is necessary at the very beginning to give right motivation to the other seven factors and gives correct directions to them.
- (D) There are certain natural laws which govern our every day lives. For instance, law of cause and effect shows that every action brings a certain result. When acts are motivated by greed hatred and delusion, pain and sufferings come back, while actions motivated by generosity, love, compassion, or wisdom the results are happiness and peace.
- (E) If we integrate this understanding, we can consciously cultivate and develop wholesome states of mind. According to Buddhism there are two sorts of understandings, they are :-
 - (1) "**anubodha**" (knowing accordingly). For an understanding, we generally use the words

"understanding is knowledge". It is the accumulation of, knowledge and memories encountered, and an intellectual grasping of a subject according to a certain given data, and is called "anubodha" knowing accordingly. This is not a deep understanding. To see more clearly we need to analyse "panna" some more. There are three types of "panna", "suta maya panna", "citta maya panna", and "bhavana maya panna". The two types of "panna" which comes under "anubodha" are "suta maya panna" and "citta maya panna".

(sutta maya panna) is the wisdom or knowledge obtained from listening to others, or from being instructed by others, or developed from reading. This type being depending on an external source, an inferred knowledge, may inspire one to tread on the path of Dhamma, but in itself can not lead to the attainment of liberty.

(citta maya panna) is the wisdom or knowledge obtained from one's own thinking, or grasped by means of own intellect, analysing something to see whether logical or rational, hereby become thorough and may be able to help others realize. Since there is lacking in direct experience or wisdom, there is danger that one may accumulate more mental defilements.

(2) "pativeda" (penetration). It is an understanding, seeing things in their true nature. The understanding, penetrating deep into things as they really are. This understanding is possible only when the mind is free from all impurities and is fully developed through meditation. "bhāvanā maya panna" the third of the three types of "Panna". Comes under this "pativeda".

(bhāvanā maya paññā) is related to this "pativeda" (penetration). It is the wisdom obtained by meditation, which is observing "Vipassana bhavana". It is the direct experience that develops in any one who practised it. It develops an

inner realization of truth.

- (F) This Right understanding "Samma ditthi", explains everything about what understanding means, leading all the way to understand rightly. This status of understanding rightly, can only be obtained by the means of direct experience, which is nothing but concentration of the mind, that is to see the truth clearly. Right understanding "Samma ditthi" involves a profound subtle knowledge, developed through careful and penetrating observation which in term is (meditation) and in Buddhist aspect is "Vipassana bhavana".

35. Right thought "Sammā sankappa"

- (A) Right understanding, a clear vision developed by meditating through careful and penetrating observation, leads to clear thinking, the Right thought "Sammā sankappa". Thoughts come from ideas, opinions, intentions, founded by the power and process of thinking. Some are lost in thoughts, thinking so deeply, forgetting to be aware of the surroundings.
- (B) Any way, thought is formed by will, or will directs thoughts. Good-will of a person, produced good thoughts whereas bad-will produces bad thoughts.
- (C) The endless cycle of desire for sense pleasure keeps the mind in turbulence and confusion. Anger is a burning fire in the mind, and causes great suffering to others as well.
- (D) Gotama Buddha's teachings is based on universal love and compassion, for all living beings, for the good and happiness of the many. This factor Right thought is shown to have a rightful thinking and teaches us to free ourselves from;-
- (1) sense desire by becoming aware of it and letting it go.
 - (2) anger by trying to be able to recognize it and letting it go.
 - (3) cruelty and harmfulness by feeling for the sufferings of others and wanting to alleviate it.
- Then only, does our mind become light and easy with no disturbance, no tension, and only expressing its natural loving kindness towards all living beings.
- (E) In all spheres of life whether individual,

social or political, deeds are done through thoughts. It is clear, thoughts of self desire, ill-will, hatred, violence, are caused because of lacking in wisdom. It is evident that the wisdom is endowed with the above mentioned noble qualities, which can occur only through Right thought.

36. The Noble Eight fold Path as discussed above is the way of life to be followed, practiced and developed by each individual. It is the self disciplining of body, word and mind, and it is the self purification and self development. It is the path leading to the realization of ultimate reality, the path leading to the complete freedom, happiness and peace through moral, spiritual, and intellectual perfection.

B H A V A N A

" Meditation or Mental culture "

1. It has already been explained that "dhamma" the "Eighty Four Thousand Dhammakhandha" were split into three groups subjectwise viz; "Vinaya" "Sutta" and "Abhidamma" as "Tipitaka" and is maintained and flourished up to this day.

2. Several ways and means of meditation "Bhavana" taught by Gotama Buddha is enclosed in the "Tipitaka".

3. It is learnt that, following Gotama Buddha's teachings, several came to know the truth, saw the imperfections and unsatisfactoriness of life; earnestly observed the means of discarding the cause and attained consecutively the four stages in the realization of "Nibbana" viz; "Sotapatti magga", "Sakadagami magga", "Anagami magga" and "Arahattaphala".

4. Most of the ways and means of meditation were meted out for a certain person who are to be emancipated from "samsara", chosen a right place and a right time and right ways and means of meditation for each of them. The ways and means differs one from another. The individuals opportunely came under the very nose of Gotama Buddha were those who in their preceding existences had performed or perfected the noble deeds aiming at the dissolution of "dukkha". The time and stage of attainments differs accordingly to the degree of noble deeds performed or perfected. Some attained the highest stage immediately after the observance of "Bhavana" whereas some took time in practising.

5. Apart from the methods shown only for a certain individual, there are also ways and means of practices where Gotama Buddha taught for all human beings to purify the lustful desires and passionate greed in their mind and to discard the wrathfulness and indignations. The ways and means are included in the "Maha Satipatthana Sutta", the most important discourse ever delivered by Gotama Buddha. It is known that this discourse was given in "Kamma-sadhamma" a village or a hamlet in the land of "Kurus".

6. There are two main reasons of choosing Kammasadhamma. One reason is in delivering Maha Satipatthana Sutta, the inhabitants with due virtues of the noble deeds done in the past were well-bred, polite, delicate, gentle,

refined, clever, skilful, intelligent, pure and well-behaved, that they may succeed observing "Bhavana". The other reason is that some of the forlorn and shipwrecked ones submerging and floating in the endless dreadful waves of the ocean of birth and death, seeing the successful ones, perhaps will take heart and follow their footsteps.

7. This "Maha Satipaṭṭhana Sutta" as originally delivered by Gotama Buddha can be found in two places of the "Tipitaka" one is in "Sutta Māhavagga Pali" of "Digha Nikāya" included in the "Sutta Pitaka" and the other is in "Mula Paṇṇasa" of "Mijjhima Nikaya" included in the "Sutta Pitaka".

8. "Maha Satipaṭṭhana Sutta" being most important of all, containing many ways and means of attaining Nibbāna and the subjects contained in "Tipitaka" were to convey from generation to generation by transmitting mouth to mouth by Sanghas, it was purposely placed in two places. The reasons are :- one is, if Sanghas failed in one it would remain in the other, and the other reason is, if one overlooked in one place he would find in the other. Thus the foresighted "Arahats" of old had arranged.

9. It is learnt that there are forty kinds of ways and means of meditation (the writer has no knowledge in detail of all the forty kinds of meditation as yet) but came to know that the ways and means of meditation "Bhāvanā" are commonly known as "Anupassana Sati" the meaning of which is;

anupassanā = attention or observation.
sati = mindfulness or awareness.

10. Most of the people have a wrong notion, imagining that one will have to leave the communities avoiding social duties, cutting off all the responsibilities and to strive hard to vanquish, or to reach a certain achievement or perfection. Reluctant to do so, many shun assunder from the practice of meditation "Bhāvanā". I was one of them before. In fact, it is not what they imagine to be. The ways and means of observing "Bhāvana" is somehow or other related to our daily walks of life, especially on ethical and knowledge of wisdom point of view. The mood or things to observe or the ways and means of attaining Nibbāna shown in the "Mahā Satipaṭṭhana Sutta" is split into the following four main "Anupassana"s. The four main "Anupassanā"s do not drive away from the daily walks of life. The moods being observation of the activities of the body, it's feelings and occurrences in the mind to

promote intellectual wisdom. Moreover it is connected with the daily walks of life but need to be cautious and mindful not, to run away with the false idea.

- (A) **Kaya Anupassanā Satipatthana**
Observance of the movements of our body.
- (B) **Vedena Anupassanā Satipatthana**
Observance of the sensations inflicted on our body.
- (C) **Citta Anupassanā Satipatthana**
Observance of the fluctuations or irregularities of our mind.
- (D) **Dhamma Anupassanā Satipatthana**
The training and disciplining to promote ethical, mental and intellectual wisdom.

11. **Kaya Anupassanā Satipattana Bhavana.** It is the means of practice that one should be aware, mindful, and attentive, with regard to the activities of the life body of ourselves and the dead bodies of others so as to know the nature and to stabilise the mind. There are several ways of developing attentiveness in relation to the body as mood of meditation. We find two common "Bhāvanā"s effectively practiced now a days. One is "Ānāpāna Anupassanā Satipaṭṭhan Bhāvanā" the mindfulness or awareness of the respiration, and the other is "Kayagata Anupassanā Satipaṭṭhana Bhavana" the mindfulness and aware-ness of all the physical and verbal performances in the routine work of day and night usual life.

- (A) **Ānāpāna Anupassanā Satipaṭṭhan Bhāvanā.** It is the method which one should be mindful or aware of his respiration. This is the only Satipaṭṭhana where the posture of the meditator is distinctively and explicitly specified.

Posture

- (1) Sit crosslegged (For those who find difficult to sit in such a position are allowed to sit conveniently now a days), hands on his lap, body comfortably erect, eyes closed or gazed at the tip of nose.

Method

- (2) Breath in and breath out as usual without any effort or strain. Keeping the mind fixed in any part of the body so that one may concentrate solely on the respiration, forgetting the surroundings and environments. One need to be aware only of the movements and changes of the breath.

Development

- (3) At first you will find very difficult to concentrate. Before getting your mind fixed on the selected part of the body you will astonishingly find that your mind is unstable, thinking of various things, running very swiftly from one thought to another, will find that your mind is disturbed, attracted away, and you will even be dismayed and disappointed.
- (4) If this method be practised regularly, will gradually, by and by, begin to concentrate only on the respiration. During that stage or period, you will find a split second fully concentrated on breathing.
- (5) In between the split second, you will find a slight moment of tremendous experience, that is full of joy, happiness, and tranquility, not hearing even the sounds nearby, feeling that no external world exists.
- (6) The slight moment is the moment you lose yourself in the mindfulness of your respiration. That is you lose your consciousness of yourself. (As long as you are conscious of yourself you can never concentrate on anything).

Findings

- (7) This practice or exercise gives immediate good results, a good physical health, relaxation, sound sleep, efficiency in work, calm and tranquility. Even at nervous and excited moment you will become immediately quiet and peaceful if you practise the same for a couple of minutes.

(This exercise or practice is simple and easy and is meant to develop concentration, leading to a very high mystic attainment "Jhana" and is essential for any kind of deep understanding penetration, insight, to the nature of things which will finally lead to the realization of Nibbana).

- (B) **Kayagata Anupassana Satipatthana Bhavana.** This form of meditation, is a practice or exercise, which is to be aware of, mindful of, every movement we made and every actions we perform. It is a teaching that we should live in the present moment or in the present action

- (1) People do not live in the present. Though they seem to be doing something, they usually spent their time in the memories of the past or in the desires and speculations of the future, that they cannot give themselves fully what they appear to be doing.
- (2) As long as you live you cannot escape life you have to face life and live by it. Real life is neither the memories of the past nor the dreams of future. Life is but the present moment. He who lives in the present, lives the real life and is the happiest.
- (3) As the effects or the accomplishments, looking forward with hope, or looking far away in the distance with fear, with worry and anxiety, are not life. But to a certain extent it is not restricted to such longings. If there be any emotional condition in which there is fear and uncertainty about the future, the past events and future consequences indicating reasons of its causes should be considered with due concern.
- (4) This mindfulness and awareness with regard to our physical activities, taught by Gotama Buddha is to live in the present.
- (5) By cultivating mindfulness and awareness day and night with regard to all activities, you will develop concentration, which is essential for any kind of deep understanding, penetration, insight, to the nature of things, which leads to the realization of Nibbana.

12. **Vedanā Anupassanā Satipatṭhana.** It is the meditation that deals with all sensations and feelings. It teaches us to be clearly aware of all forms of observations occurred and to be aware of how they appear and disappear.

- (A) Sensations being hatched, or sprout out, or experienced through the contact of one of the five aggregates the "vedanākkhandha" (The visible form, sound, odour, taste, tangible things and mind or thought or idea). Sensations are of three forms pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. All human beings senses one or other of them at a time and can never escape from those sensations.
- (B) Whenever you feel a sensation, respectively to the three forms of sensations, for instance:- if it be unpleasant sensation you feel cloudy, lazy, unhappy and depressed, and if it be pleasant sensation you feel fresh, cheerful, joyful, merry,

happy and jubilant. You must examine how and why those sensations come about and should practise not to be effected or react by those sensations. Most of the people never try to think how and why those sensations come about.

- (C) It had already been explained that the so called "a being" or "an individual" or "I", is no other than a combination of the five aggregates and mind matters, and had shown clearly that none of the five aggregates or mind can be definitely termed as "a being" or "an individual" or "I". Still people clinging on to the false idea of "I".
- (D) This meditation is to find out the causes why we enjoy pleasant sensations and suffer unpleasant sensations, observing objectively with subjective reaction, forgetting the false idea of "I", so that you see clearly its nature how it arises and disappears.
- (E) So finding, your mind will grow dispassionately towards the sensation and feelings and become detached and free. It should be applied similarly regarding all sorts of sensations and feelings. The aim of this meditation is to free or liberate from the grasping of "tanhā" and to develop the mind to realize the truth.

13. **Citta Anupassanā Satipaṭṭhan.** It is the meditation that deals with mind which is to be mindful or aware of all the movements formed in the mind.

- (A) One should be aware of the fact whether his mind is lustful or not, given to hatred or not, deluded or not, passionate or detached, diversified or concentrated, so on and so forth. You can only be aware of the facts (seeing the true nature clearly) by observing, watching, and examining. In this way one should be aware of all the movements of mind, how they arise and disappear.
- (B) Most of the human beings do not want to take into account on the condition, or state, or the situation of their mind. It seems that they are reluctant to confront with their own mind. We need to pay attention and note carefully to know,
 - (1) If his mind be entwined or interlaced with lustful desire and passion, that his mind is lustful and passionate.
 - (2) If his mind is free from lust and passion, that his mind is clear peaceful and sound.
 - (3) If his mind be filled with anger, resentment, grudge, hatred, jealous, and envy, that his

mind is wrathful and indignant.

- (4) If his mind be free from wrath and indignation, that his mind is filled with love, kindness, affection and benevolence.
- (5) If his mind be filled with ignorance, that his mind is blissed with ignorance.
- (6) If his mind be free from being blessed with ignorance, that his mind is thoroughly familiar, comprehensive with things and understandings.

(C) We must not run away with the idea that we must criticize or appportion the condition of mind whether sound and perfect, bad and evil, or to praise it as genuine and authentic, or blame its errors and mistakes, but just to pay attention or concentration to know how thought appears and disappears.

For example: You are overpowered by anger, ill-will and hatred, and are very angry, for he who is in anger is not aware or mindful that he is angry. The moment you become aware or mindful of your anger, you become shy and ashamed, and your anger begins to subside.

(D) Here again, just the same way as explained in the "Vedanā Anupassanā" you should try and examine objectively the cause and nature of anger keeping aside the false idea of "I am angry" or "my anger". Then only you become detached and free, and see things as they truly are. This attitude should be applied with regard to all sensations, emotions, and state of mind.

(E) Thus practising or examining objectively you will come to know the nature, the characteristics, the dispositions, the temperaments, or habit of mind, and knowing it's fickle, unreliable, permeable or false, will tend to the eradication of "dukkha", and to leave or separate from its cause, the lustful desire "taṇhā", finally leading to the Right Mindfulness, the mental culture or mental development which will ultimately realize Absolute Truth, the Nibbāna.

14. **Dhamma Anupassanā Satipatṭhana.** It is the meditation of thinking regarding ideas, thoughts, conceptions and things. One should know the nature how they arise and disappear, how they are developed, how they are suppressed and so on. As shown in the above mentioned Kaya, Vedanā

and Citta anupassanas, this meditation also meant to be mindful and aware of the physical activities, all forms of feelings and sensations which occurred or appears in mind. It only differs in the ways of meditation. The form of meditation is the studies, readings, discussions, and conversations, which are the training aiming at promoting ethical, spiritual and intellectual spheres (wisdom). According to this form of meditation you may study, think and deliberate on the facts included in the -

- (A) The Four Noble Truths, which we are discussing now.
- (B) The "Nivarana" the Five Hinderances, that they are obstacles hindering the clear understanding and progress.
- (C) The "Bojjhargas" the Seven Factors of Illumination, that they are to cultivate.
- (D) The following "Brahma Vihāra" the Four Sublime States.
 - (1) "Mettā" to extend unlimited universal love and good-will to all living beings without any kind of discrimination.
 - (2) "Karunā" compassion for all living beings who are suffering in trouble and affliction.
 - (3) "Muditā" sympathetic joy in others' success, welfare and happiness.
 - (4) "Upekkhā" equanimity in all vicissitudes of life. i.e. to face life in all condition of changes as wealth, poverty, success and failure.

There are many other such subjects to study, to think and to deliberate on, which will give deep understanding, leading finally to the realization of Ultimate Truth, the Nibbana.

(The above mentioned are the precise form of all I know so far about the ways and means of meditation "Bhāvanā").

E p i t o m e

The scene of the world of living beings is an endless vibration of intensely conflicting state. All of us are familiar with the experiences of conflicts. No one can escape without being crushed by it. Everyone will have to experience it throughout their lives.

Though we have the potential of human existence i.e., Compassion and wisdom to compromise our likings and dislikes, we all are involved in difficulties, frustrations and disappointments by picking and choosing only what we want, without wanting to receive the bits that we don't like. That is what and why the things we like and dislike set up conflicts in our mind.

Buddhist approach to conflicts is not simply to exterminate the conflicts but to find a realistic relationship with it and to bring about the result of our aiming goal, "Nibbana", the Absolute Reality, the Ultimate Truth. The teachings of the Four Noble Truths set forth a pattern for relating to life and to realize our aiming goal.

By awareing incisively and trenchantly the teachings of the Four Noble Truths and fully confident that there is "Nibbana" to realize we have four functions to perform.

The First Noble Truth "Dukkha Sacca"

This Noble Truth explains that life is nothing but setting up conflicts in our mind which are happenings of all sorts of confusing impermanencies, muddled up and causing sufferings, which we succinctly elucidate as "dukkha" the Universal sufferings.

It teaches us understand "dukkha" clearly. Explaining the impermanencies of the nature of life, it's sorrow, it's joys, it's imperfections and unsatisfactions, and so on and so forth of all happenings. Every occurrences being impermanent and annihilate in no time, all are in fact sufferings.

People feel agitated and inadequate when they hear or meet horrendous things. They start to restrain to it. If we cannot receive or feel sufferings then we cannot begin to work with it.

The important point in practice is learning how to

feel or to confront the confliotions by understanding incisively and trenchantly with rightful thought "parineyya" the nature of life, and it's woes.

The second Noble Truth "Samudaya Sacca"

Taught to have the knowledge that life is experiencing impermanencies of interchangeable joys and woes, which are in fact sufferings "dukkha", this Noble Truth step up explaining in detail to know the main cause of how Universal sufferings "dukkha" occurs, and why people always suffer.

Having had the thorough understanding of what "dukkha" is, and by recapturing our capacity for feeling life, or the potential of human existence, this Noble Truth taught us to enable us to find the cause of suffering "dukkha", by investigating the dynamic of our picking and choosing the conflicts, formed in our mind.

In Buddhism there is no first cause. All effects of causes become the causes of the oncoming effects. In such away, causes and effects continues in an unending circle. We will not be able to point out any of the causes to be the first cause.

Although there are a lot of factors causing "dukkha", we came to know that the emphasis we give to our preference creates the strongest sense of me, the enormous amount of energy in desire "taṇhā", accompanied by passion, defilement, and impurities, became the main culprit.

A mere understanding or merely having the knowledge, that the wrong relationship with wanting, will lead to all sufferings "dukkha", is not sufficient to be satisfied. Our function is to discard, to eliminate, "pahatabba" and eradicate it.

The Third Noble Truth "Nirodha Sacca"

As there are factors causing sufferings, there must inevitably be something that there is of no sufferings. This Noble Truth explains that there is "Nibbāna", clarifying "Nibbāna" to be an annihilation, or an eradication, or an extinction of "dukkha". Letting know that "Nibbāna" is Absolute Reality, or Ultimate Truth.

"Nibbāna" being not the experience of almost all

human beings and being quite beyond the reach, it can not be easily clarified with human language. This Noble Truth explains in detail, to visualize what "Nibbāna" is. Winding up the explanations, we came to understand vividly that this Noble Truth directs us to have a better knowledge of the extinction of sufferings or the emancipation from sufferings. On the whole we are made to know that;-

Once we bring the light of awareness to bear on the process of conflicts when confronted in our mind, in that very moment of keeping awareness on the conflicts, we start getting release out of the clutch of conflicts,

If the practice goes the whole way we release out of "dukkha" completely,

and by that experience we are convinced that the aiming goal "Nibbāna" is the liberation, the enlightenment.

Having only the knowledge of eradicating the cause of "dukkha" and the release out of its clutch will not be effectual. To have an incisive and trenchant understanding, or the clear appreciation of the possibility of such a goal "Nibbāna", is important. Then only the energies that we have within our capacity for feeling life or the potential of human existence, can arise to heartily heed to with might and main, of seeing the Absolute Reality the Ultimate Truth, or to realize "Nibbāna".

Just knowing that the consequence of eradication or emancipation of "dukkha" is "Nibbāna" will not do, not sufficient, not to be satisfied, our function is to realize "saccikatāba" it.

The Fourth Noble Truth "Magga Sacca"

Clarifying oneself that there is "Nibbana", the complete release from suffering "dukkha" is possible, and making oneself to have the desire of aiming at it as goal, this Noble Truth explains the "Magga path" or the "Eightfold path" which is the ways and means of attaining "Nibbana".

The "Magga path" or the "Eightfold path" directs one to free from all sufferings "dukkha". It makes one to be blessed with Wisdom, which is seeing things meaningfully, with profound thought, concentrating on facts and

matter of the circumstances, to find out incisively and trenchantly as they really are, and take along one to bring forth the realization of Absolute Reality, Ultimate Truth, the "Nibbana".

To be effectively blessed with the bliss of "Nibbana", the "Magga path" or the "Eightfold path" teaches us to be acceptive. It teaches us to recognize and aware of all the incoming conflicts so as not to be crushed by the conflicts, not to be lost in it, but to be receptive, and then release out of it. Showing the ways and means, the "Magga path" or the "Eightfold path" carries us along to take up step by step till realizing the aiming goal "Nibbana", the Absolute Reality, the Ultimate Truth finally.

To get on well and follow the path leading to the realization of "Nibbana", or to live in a way that honours the insight that release from suffering is possible, what one necessarily need to be done is to practise to have sharp, keen and perceptive, intellectual ability. Then only the bliss of Wisdom "Panna" can be attained.

The practice of acquiring Wisdom "Panna" is no other than observing "Bhavana", the practice of mental culture or mental development. The full sence of the term aim at cleanseing the mind to clear out the impurities and all sorts of disturbances, leading finally to the bliss of Wisdom "Panna".

What so ever the ways and means and the steps to be taken are learnt and completely known, will not bring about the result required. Our function is to keep to "bhavetabba", the ways and means eleborately taught to realize "Nibbana".

(In observing Vipassana Bhavana one should be very careful or cautious to be properly and systemadically done. If not, there is liability of missing the mark. The exertion will be in vain, and even there is danger to be dilapidated, veering the other way of the intended aim. There are many a wise and learned to coach methodically in accordance to what was originally taught. It is advis-ible to learn, or to take training from those ones who can give proper, tentative and realistic techniques.)

*Though
new , small , comprehensive & cheap ,
not
old , large , specialized & expensive ,
presented accordingly to writer's opinion ,
well or badly , to help readers know,
how to
emerge from the darkness of the cave ,
into
the light of freedom & peace
of
What Gotama Buddha Taught*