

Bauddha Darsana

Lecture 6

Four Noble Truths

The middle path is called as majjhimapatipada in Pali language. Majjhima means middle and patipada means the path. Generally it refers to the way of Sakyamuni Buddha. In this path one avoids all extremes like indulgence in sense pleasures on one hand and self-mortification and severe asceticism on the other. In relation to the existence or nonexistence of all things, it treads the middle way of dependent origination or dependent existence. Neither eternalism nor nihilism but dependent being and belief in the path and experience on this dependent existence is the middle path which is the basic tenet of Buddhism. Here I quote a very famous quote of Aldous Huxley who says the spiritual journey does not consist of arriving at a new destination where a person gains what he did not have or becomes what he is not. On the other hand it consists in the dissipation of one's own ignorance concerning oneself and life and the gradual growth of that understanding which brings the spiritual awakening.

This is what the middle path that is understanding which brings the spiritual awakening. The 3rd basic tenets of Buddhism is the four noble truths which are called as Chaturari Arya Satyama. That is only one thing does Tathagatha i.e. Buddha teach namely suffering and the cessation of suffering and this is revealed in the Sutta Pitaka. In this very one fathom long body along with its perceptions and thoughts, do I proclaim the world, the origin of the world, the cessation of the world, the path leading to the cessation of the world. Here the world refers to the world suffering and how this suffering originates and how this suffering can be overcome all this can be revealed in the Rohitassa Sutta, Sutta Pitaka.

What are the four noble truths called as Arya Sacca, the 1st is the noble truth of suffering that is Dukkha Arya Sacca.

The 2nd is the noble truth of the origin of suffering that is called Dukkha Samudaya Arya Sacca.

The 3rd noble truth is the cessation of suffering i.e. Dukkha Nirodha Arya Sacca.

The 4th is the noble truth of the way to the cessation of suffering which is called Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Patipada Arya Sacca. So this is the noble eightfold path which is called as Ariya Atthangika Magga. The four facts of life's based on four

noble truths or based on four facts of life are 1st recognizing pain and suffering all living beings suffer that how many do recognize really what is pain and suffering. When you understanding pain and suffering correctly as it is only then you exert release yourself or oneself from pain and suffering. So here we have recognizing pain and suffering 1st noble truth and 2nd understanding the cause of pain and suffering and 3rd realizing there is an end to pain and suffering and 4th is stepping into freedom from pain and suffering. So thus we have four noble truths and this 1st truth of suffering is to be compared with a diseases the truth of the origin of suffering with cause of diseases. The truth of the extinction of the suffering with cure of diseases and then the truth of the path with the medicine which is reveal in the visuddhi Magga.

This can be briefly understood in the form of symptom, diagnosis, prognosis, prescription. Let for example when person fall a sick. He known about his sickness through the symptoms and then when he goes to a doctor he diagnosed some diseases and then the doctor gives them a cure and then a prescription telling him that he can definitely be cure of his suffering in the same way Buddha the doctor spiritual scientist said that Dukkha suffering and the cause for the Dukkha or suffering is Trishna i.e. ignorance and attachment or craving and prognosis the predicament that one can be cured of the diseases is Nirvana i.e. liberation and the prescription the eight fold path or the Marga.

Thus we have the four noble truths are the briefest synthesis of the entire teachings of Buddhism since all those manifold doctrines of the threefold canon i.e. Tripitaka are without exception include therein.

Let us study these four noble truth in a little detail:

The 1st noble truth of suffering Dukkha Arya Sacca what is Buddha mean by it, he tell his Bhikkhus, O Bhikkhus the noble truth of suffering. Birth is suffering, death is suffering, decay is suffering, diseases is suffering to be united with the unpleasant is suffering to be separated from the pleasant is suffering not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief the five aggregates of attachment are suffering. We study about the five aggregates a little later in the following lecture.so this in brief is first noble truth of suffering which are to be understand rightly and this is told in first discourses of the Buddha Sutta pitaka Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta.

Next we come the continuous of 1st the noble truth of suffering Dukkha can be translated as sorrowfulness suffering or unsatisfactoriness. There are three types of dukkhas according to Buddha,

The 1st dukkha-dukkha immense intrinsic ordinary suffering physical & mental it could be.

The 2nd Viparinama-dukkha that is suffering due to change in any environment in any state etc.

The 3rd Sankhara Dukkha that is suffering due to formation and as conditioned states the general unsatisfactoriness of existence all living beings micro or macro go through these three kinds of sufferings. But very few people know the cause of suffering and know the way to end the suffering.

The 2nd noble truth talk about the origin of the suffering i.e. Dukkha Samudaya Arya Sacca. Buddha told his bhikkhus, O bhikkhus the noble truth origin of the suffering is thus. It is due to craving i.e. tanha which produces rebirth accompanied by passionate clinging welcoming this and that life. So inspiring a particular kind of life negating another kind of life is craving is tanha which the root cause of the origin of the suffering according to Buddha. It is the craving for sensual pleasures craving for existence and craving for non-existence, this is the noble truth of the origin of suffering should eradicated. This is the diagnosis of the diseases of the suffering told in Sutta pitaka Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta.

The 3rd noble truth is the cessation of suffering if there is suffering if there is causes for suffering there can be end to suffering. There can be way out of suffering is what the Buddha told through the 3rd noble truth of the Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca he told his bhikkhus, O bhikkhus the noble truth of the cessation of suffering. It is the complete separation from, and destruction of this very craving its forsaking renunciation the liberation therefrom and non-attachment to thereto this noble truth of the cessation of suffering. When one overcomes tanha or craving. When one overcomes desire or craving of any kind one can experience liberation here and now.

So the 3rd noble truth refers to Nibbana i.e. enlightenment which must be realized for oneself. It is necessary to eliminate the root of Dukkha which is craving for Dukkha to be eliminated and Nibbana to be attained. One has to give up tanha or desire in any form related to any object person, place or thing. If there is way out of suffering then what is that way.

So the 4th noble truth of the way to the cessation of suffering talks about the same Buddha told Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Patipada Arya Sacca he said O bhikkhus the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering. It is the noble eightfold path i.e. Atthangika Magga. This noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering should be developed and the noble eightfold path must be followed to realize Nibbana here and now.

The Noble Eight Fold Path

The dhamma practice the path is like the three wheel with three segments namely sila, Samadhi and panna or pana, sila and Samadhi also called as pragihya, sila and samaghi. So panna refers to wisdom that is told in the form of right view and right resolve. Right view is called as samma ditthi in Pali language and right resolve is called as samma samkappa or the right intention in Pali language.

The 2nd is sila which constitute of three spokes namely right speech that is samma vaca and right action or conduct that is samma kammanta and the 3rd is right livelihood that is samma ajiva. Samadhi constitute of three spokes namely right effort samma vayama, right mindfulness that is samma sati and right concentration is samma Samadhi. Let us see briefly about these eight fold spokes.

So right view or understanding is samma ditthi. Samma here refer to samyak or right and ditthi refer to view or understanding. Right view or understanding about what it refer to right understanding of kamma and right understanding of ten kinds of subject and right view of the four noble truths. So sammaditthi sutta refer reads as follows right view right view they say friends. How the noble disciple is possesses of the right view. How are we to know that are view is right or not. So Buddha said when friends the noble disciple understands unrighteous action and the root of unrighteous action the righteous action and the root of righteous action, then he is possessed of the right view. When one is able to discriminate between the righteous and the unrighteous then one is said to have the right view or right understanding of reality.

This right view or understanding with regards to the question as to what constitute the righteous and unrighteous actions and their respective roots, it is pointed out that greed, hatred, delusion are the roots of all unrighteous actions and their opposite are the roots of righteous actions. So in the table given below you can see left hand side the root of unrighteous action namely greed, hatred, delusion called as lobha, dosha, and moha. And right hand side you have the root of righteous

action in the form of generosity i.e. a lobha, love or comparison i.e. a dosha and wisdom i.e. a moha.

The 2nd is the right thought or intentions samma samkappa when one has the right view or understanding one develop the right thoughts and their right intentions. What are those thoughts of renunciation, generosity, liberality opposed to greed and sensual desire are the right thoughts. Which are the 2nd part of eight fold path of liberation. The thoughts of benevolence for the welfare of all beings opposed to ill will and thoughts of harmlessness for all beings opposed to cruelty. This nurtured in the practices this intern to right speech i.e. samma vaca. When there is a non-violence in benevolence in ones thoughts then automatically reflected ones speech.

So right speech is 3rd part of the eight fold path and it refer to refraining from false speech and all untruth. It refer to refraining from defamatory speech or using abusive language. The 3rd refer to refraining from harsh words and abusive language. And 4th refraining from idle chatter and frivolous talk and spending all the time in gossip. So when one understands the value of right speech then the action also become right, when thoughts are right the speech is right, the action is right and is called as samma kammanta i.e. refraining from killing and injuring any living beings. Refraining from taking anything not freely given and refraining from sexual misconduct and abuse of the senses brings from right action.

The 5th we have the right livelihood i.e. samma ajiva that means the way of ones earning also should be right. The ways of one livelihood also are to be nonviolent benevolent. For this one are to refereeing and avoid the following lively kinds of livelihood according to Buddha. So dealing in arms and weapons, dealing with human beings i.e. prostitution and slavery and human trafficking all these are prohibited under the right livelihood, dealing in living beings and flesh butchery or avoided by a person who takes this to eight fold path.

The 4th is dealing in intoxicating drinks has to be avoided under the right livelihood spoke of the eight fold path and dealing in poison also are to be given up and dealing with all kinds of harmful chemical or to be given up under the right livelihood. That one should not take to this trades and earn money because these cause these intern lead to violence lead a person from violence to more violence for wrong livelihood by means of immoral physical and verbal actions i.e. deceit, soothsaying, treachery, trickery, usuary also should be avoided under the right livelihood.

Next we have the right effort i.e. samma vayama so what we are not to do has been told from one to five. What one are to do the effort to prevent the raising of unarisen unwholesome states should be given up. The effort to discard unwholesome states already arisen in one person should be given up. The 3rd is the effort to develop unarisen wholesome states that has good states that have not so far aroused in a person should be neuter and 4th to promote wholesome states already one has experience among to the right effort. The effort should be taken to give up unfold some states of the mind, of the body and of this speech and effort should be applied to develop whole some states of the body mind and this speech.

The 7th we come to right mindfulness i.e. samma sati. The four foundations of mindfulness are mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of feelings, mindfulness of consciousness or states of mind and finally mindfulness of mental content or phenomena i.e. dhammas that is there one essence. So mindfulness is very important aspects of the Buddhist meditation and start with mindfulness of the body and then mindfulness of feelings and then mindfulness of the conscious real and then transcending that and being mindful of one's core essence i.e. dhammas.

And 8th we have right concentration i.e. samma Samadhi. That is only when the first seven right. Then the person can experience the 8th is samma Samadhi that is peace here and now. So this refers to one pointedness of the mind developed through meditation that is samma mindfulness a samma sati. In this right concentration one takes to advance a meditation practices in the form of four rupa jhanas i.e. absorptions related to the forms which are ecstatic absorptions and cannot be Putin words. The 2nd is four arupa jhanas are the ecstatic absorption related to the formless and then comes nirodha samapatti that is complete transcendence.

So this is the eightfold path which leads person from suffering to complete peace and joy. Rise devils says I have examined every one of the great religious system of the world. And in none of those have I found anything to surpass in beauty and comprehensiveness the noble eightfold path of the Buddha I am content to shape my life according to that path.

Noble eightfold path is indispensable for ensuring welfare and happiness not only for the individual, but the family, the society, the country and the world at large.

So thus the summary of the eightfold path we have the panna that is wisdom comprising of the right view and right thoughts. We have sila that is morality comprising of the right speech, right action and right livelihood. We have Samadhi that is meditation comprising of the right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. So this the essence the basic tenets of Buddha 1st we saw the middle path and then the four noble truths and then the eightfold path and summary of its cease to do evil, cultivate the good, purify the heart. This the teaching of all the Buddha's.

Here a summary of the lecture, why study Buddhism? What do we mean and how do we study Buddhism. Here Eihei Dogan in his lecture in his lecture Genjo koan says to study Buddhism is actually to study the self. To study the self is to forget the lower self the false ego and to forget the self is to be awakened to higher self and to the all things. And this awakening continues endlessly in the Buddha enlightened state. So this the purpose of study Buddhism.