

THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY

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INTRODUCING BUDDHISM

CONTENTS

What is Buddhism?

The Four Noble Truths

The Eightfold Path

History and the Disposition of the Traditions

The Three Basic Facts of Existence

Buddhist Meditation

The Buddhist Teachings of Karma and Rebirth

Summing Up

Buddhist Literature

Glossary

The Refuges and Precepts

The Discourse on Loving Kindness

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What is Buddhism?

Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa!

Homage to Him, the Exalted, the Worthy, the Fully Enlightened One!

“The non-aggressive, moral and philosophical system expounded by the Buddha, which demands no blind faith from its adherents, expounds no dogmatic creeds, encourages no superstitious rites and ceremonies, but advocates a golden mean that guides a disciple through pure living and pure thinking to the gain of supreme vision and deliverance from evil, is called the Dhamma and is popularly known as Buddhism” (Narada, *Buddhism in a Nutshell*)

THE TRIPLE GEM (TIRATANA)

The Buddha achieved enlightenment. He avoided the two extremes of self-indulgence (which retards spiritual progress) and self-mortification (which weakens the intellect), and instead discovered and followed the middle path (Majjhima Patipada) which led to his enlightenment. Thereafter he taught this path until his death.

The Buddha is not a God, nor a savior who can save others. He explained that deliverance from suffering can only be gained by self-exertion and advised his disciples to be self-reliant.

“Striving should be done by yourselves. The Tathagatas (Buddhas) are only teachers.” (*Dhammapada*, verse 276)

“Come O Kalamas, Do not accept anything on mere hearsay. Do not accept anything by mere tradition. Do not accept anything on account of rumors. Do not accept anything just because it accords with your scriptures. Do not accept anything by mere supposition. Do not accept anything by mere inference. Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your preconceived notions. Do not accept anything merely because it seems acceptable. Do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic respected by us. But when you know for yourselves—these things are immoral, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the wise, these

things when performed and undertaken, conduce to ruin and sorrow—then indeed do you reject them. When you know for yourselves—these things are moral, these things are blameless, these things are praised by the wise, these things when performed and undertaken, conduce to well-being and happiness—then do you live and act accordingly.” (Kalama Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

The Buddha said “He who sees the Dhamma sees me.” (*Sutta Pitaka*)

THE DHAMMA

“The Dhamma is good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end.” (*Sutta Pitaka*)

“The original Pali term for Buddhism is Dhamma, which, literally, means that which upholds or sustains (him who acts in conformity with it’s principles and thus prevents him from falling in woeful states)...The Dhamma is that which really is. It is the Doctrine of Reality. It is a means of Deliverance from suffering, and Deliverance itself. Whether the Buddhas arise or not the Dhamma exists in all eternity. It is a Buddha that realizes the Dhamma, which lies hidden from the ignorant eyes of men, till He, an enlightened One, comes and compassionately reveals it to the World...This sublime Dhamma is not something apart from oneself. It is purely dependent upon oneself and to be realized by oneself.” (Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*)

“Abide with oneself as an island...with the Dhamma as a refuge.” (Parinibbana Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

“The Dhamma He (The Buddha) taught is not merely to be preserved in Books, nor is it subject to be studied from an historical or literary standpoint. On the contrary it is to be learned and put into practice in the course of one’s daily life, for without practice one cannot appreciate the truth. The Dhamma is to be studied, and more to be practiced, and above all to be realized (by one’s intuitive wisdom); immediate realization is it’s ultimate goal. As such the Dhamma is compared to a raft which is meant for the sole purpose of escaping from the ocean of birth and death (Samsara).” (Narada, *Buddhism in a Nutshell*)

“This sublime Dhamma...deals with truth and facts that can be testified and verified by personal experience and is not concerned with theories and speculations, which may be accepted as profound truths today and thrown overboard tomorrow. The Buddha did not expound revolutionary philosophical theories, nor did He attempt to create a new material science. In plain terms He explained both what is within and without, so far as it concerns emancipation from the ills of life, and revealed the unique Path of Deliverance...the Buddha did not teach all that He knew...He taught what He deemed was absolutely essential for one’s purification,

and was characteristically silent on questions irrelevant to His Noble Mission.”
(Narada, *Buddha and His Teachings*)

Although the Buddha did not leave any written teachings, his disciples (the Sangha) recited and subsequently committed to writing the teachings.

THE SANGHA

The Buddha established a Sangha (Order) of Bhikkus (Monks) and Bhikkunis.



THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

“One thing only does the Tathagata (Buddha) teach, namely suffering and the cessation of suffering (*Sutta Pitaka*)

“In this very one-fathom long body along with it’s 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.” (Rohitassa Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

ARIYA SACCA

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. The Noble Truth of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Ariya Sacca</i> |
| 2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Samudaya Ariya Sacca</i> |
| 3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca</i> |
| 4. The Noble Truth of the Way to the Cessation
Of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Patipada
Ariya Sacca</i> |
| This is the Noble Eightfold Path | <i>Ariya Atthangika Magga</i> |

“The truth of suffering is to be compared with a disease, the truth of the origin of suffering with the cause of the disease, the truth of the extinction of suffering with the cure of the disease, the truth of the path with the medicine.” (*Visuddhi Magga*)

“The Four Noble Truths are the briefest synthesis of the entire teachings of Buddhism, since all those manifold doctrines of the threefold Canon (Tipitaka) are without exception, included therein.” (Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*)

1) THE NOBLE TRUTH OF SUFFERING DUKKHA ARIYA SACCA

“Now, this, O Bhikkus is the Noble Truth of Suffering. Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death is suffering, to be untied with the unpleasant is suffering, to be separated from the pleasant is suffering, not to get what one desires is suffering... This Noble Truth of Suffering should be perceived.”
(*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, Sutta Pitaka*) (The first discourse of the Buddha)

Dukkha can be translated as sorrowfulness, suffering or unsatisfactoriness. There are three types of dukkha:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| a) dukkha-dukkha | intrinsic or ordinary suffering (physical and mental) |
| b) viparinama-dukkha | suffering due to change |
| c) sankhara-dukkha | suffering due to formations and as conditioned states
(the general unsatisfactoriness of existence) |

The First Truth “shows that, in consequence of the universal law of impermanency, all the phenomena of existence whatsoever...are subject to change and dissolution, and hence are miserable and unsatisfactory; and thus, without exception, they all contain in themselves the germ of suffering.” (Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*)

**2) THE NOBLE TRUTH OF THE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING
DUKKHA SAMUDAYA ARIYA SACCA**

“Now this O Bhikkus, is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering. It is this craving (tanha) which produces rebirth, accompanied by passionate clinging, welcoming this and that (life). It is the craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence and craving for non-existence...This Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering should be eradicated.” (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

**3) THE NOBLE TRUTH OF CESSATION OF SUFFERING
DUKKHA NIRODHA ARIYA SACCA**

“Now this O Bhikkus, is the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering. It is the complete separation from, and the destruction of, this very craving (tapha), it’s forsaking, renunciation, the liberation therefrom, and the non-attainment thereto...This Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering should be realized.” (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

The Third Noble Truth refers to nibbana (Enlightenment) which must be realized for oneself. It is necessary to eliminate the root of dukkha which is craving (tanha) for dukkha to be eliminated and nibbana to be attained.

**4) THE NOBLE TRUTH OF THE WAY TO THE CESSATION OF
SUFFERING
DUKKHA NIRODHA GAMINI PATIPADA ARIYA SACCA**

“Now this O Bhikkus, is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to Cessation of Suffering. It is the Noble Eightfold Path...This Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering should be developed.” (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

The Noble Eightfold must be followed to realize nibbana.

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

ARIYA ATTHANGIKA MAGGA

WISDOM

PANNA

1) Right View or Understanding

Samma Ditthi

2) Right Thoughts or Intentions

Samma Samkappa

MORALITY

- 1) Right Speech**
- 2) Right Action**
- 3) Right Livelihood**

CONCENTRATION

- 1) Right Effort**
- 2) Right Mindfulness**
- 3) Right Concentration**

SILA

- Samma Vaca**
- Samma Kammanta**
- Samma Ajiva**

SAMADHI

- Samma Vayama**
- Samma Sati**
- Samma Samadhi**



THE EIGHTFOLD PATH

“What, O Bhikkus (monks) is that Middle Path the Tathagata (Buddha) has comprehended which promotes sight and knowledge, and which tends to peace, higher wisdom, enlightenment and Nibbana? The very Noble Eightfold Path.”
(Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, *Sutta Pitaka*)

THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

ARIYA SACCA

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The Noble Truth of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Ariya Sacca</i> |
| 2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Samudaya Ariya Sacca</i> |
| 3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering | <i>Dukkha Nirodha Ariya Sacca</i> |
| 4. The Noble Truth of the Way to the Cessation
Of Suffering
This is the Noble Eightfold Path | <i>Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Patipada
Ariya Sacca
Ariya Atthangika Magga</i> |

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

ARIYA ATTHANGIKA MAGGA

WISDOM

PANNA

- 1) Right View or Understanding
- 2) Right Thoughts or Intentions

Samma Ditthi
Samma Samkappa

MORALITY

SILA

- 1) Right Speech
- 2) Right Action
- 3) Right Livelihood

Samma Vaca
Samma Kammanta
Samma Ajiva

CONCENTRATION

SAMADHI

- 1) Right Effort
- 2) Right Mindfulness
- 3) Right Concentration

Samma Vayama
Samma Sati
Samma Samadhi

MORALITY (SILA), CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI) AND WISDOM (PANNA)

When considered from the standpoint of practical training the Noble Eightfold Path consists of the following groups:

- 1) Moral Discipline Group

Silakkhandha

- 2) Concentration Group
- 3) Wisdom Group

Samadhikkhanda
Pannakkhanda

WISDOM (PANNA)

- 1) **RIGHT VIEW OR UNDERSTANDING (SAMMA DITTHI)**
 - a) Right View of kamma
 - b) Right View of the ten kinds of subjects
 - c) Right View of the Four Noble Truths
- 2) **RIGHT THOUGHTS OR INTENTIONS (SAMMA SAMKAPPA)**
 - a) Thoughts of renunciation (opposed to greed and sensual desire)
 - b) Thoughts of benevolence for the welfare of all beings (opposed to ill will)
 - c) Thoughts of harmlessness for all beings (opposed to cruelty)

MORALITY (SILA)

- 3) **RIGHT SPEECH (Samma Vaca)**
 - a) Refraining from false speech
 - b) Refraining from slanderous speech
 - c) Refraining from harsh words and abusive language
 - d) Refraining from idle chatter and frivolous talk
- 4) **RIGHT ACTION (SAMMA KAMMANTA)**
 - a) Refraining from killing and injuring any living being
 - b) Refraining from taking anything not freely given
 - c) Refraining from sexual misconduct and abuse of the senses
- 5) **RIGHT LIVELIHOOD (SAMMA AJIVA)**

Lay people should avoid the following types of livelihood:

 - a) Dealing in Weapons and arms
 - b) Dealing in human beings (e.g. prostitution and slavery)
 - c) Dealing in living beings and flesh (e.g. butchery)
 - d) Dealing in intoxicating drinks
 - e) Dealing in poison

Lay people should refrain from wrong livelihood by means of immoral physical and verbal actions (e.g. deceit, soothsaying, treachery, trickery, usury)

CONCENTRATION (SAMADHI)

- 6) **RIGHT EFFORT (SAMMA VAYAMA)**
 - a) The effort to prevent the arising of unarisen unwholesome states
 - b) The effort to discard unwholesome states already arisen
 - c) The effort to develop unarisen wholesome states

- d) **The effort to promote the wholesome states already arisen**
- 7) **RIGHT MINDFULNESS (SAMMA SATI)**
 - The Four Foundations of Mindfulness**
 - a) **Mindfulness of the body**
 - b) **Mindfulness of the feelings**
 - c) **Mindfulness of consciousness or states of mind**
 - d) **Mindfulness of mental objects or phenomena (dhammas)**
- 8) **RIGHT CONCENTRATION (SAMMA SAMDHI)**
 - This is one-pointedness of the mind developed through meditation. (The Jhanas)**



HISTORY AND THE DISPOSITION OF TRADITIONS

“A unique being, an extraordinary man arises in this world for the benefit of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world...Who is this unique being? It is the Tathagata (the Buddha), the Exalted, Fully Enlightened One.” (*Sutta Pitaka*)

THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

A prince was born on the full moon day of May 623 BC (according to some schools of Buddhism) in Lumbini Park at Kapilavatthu, on the present day borders of India and Nepal. His father was King Suddhodana of the Sakya clan. The Prince was named Siddhattha (wish fulfilled). His family name was Gotama. Eight distinguished Brahmins examined the prince. It was declared that he would become a universal monarch or would retire from the world and become a Buddha.

During his childhood the Prince was left unattended under a rose apple tree at a ploughing festival. He meditated on the breath and achieved one-pointedness of mind. At the age of sixteen he married his cousin Princess Yasodhara. He lived a happy married life for thirteen years in luxurious conditions created by his father, to shelter him from the realities of life. While being driven in his carriage outside the palace he saw four signs which changed his view of the world: an old man, a sick person, a corpse and an ascetic. At the age of twenty-nine he decided to renounce the world to search for the Truth.

Siddhattha left the palace and became a homeless ascetic. He studied under two teachers Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta, understood their teachings and left them to search for the Truth. Five ascetics joined him. For about six years he practiced extreme austerities. Remembering the one-pointedness of mind achieved under the rose apple tree and seeing the futility of excessive austerity he decided to renounce these extreme ascetic practices. His five companions deserted him fearing that he had returned to his life of luxury.

On the Full Moon day of May in his 35th year he sat under the Bodhi tree at Buddhagaya and attained Buddhahood (achieved enlightenment). Thereafter he is known as the Buddha (the Enlightened or the Awakened One). The Buddha referred to himself as the Tathagata (He who has thus gone).

The Buddha walked to the Deer Park at Isipatana near Benares to join his five former companions. On the Full Moon day July 528 BC (according to some schools of Buddhism) the Buddha delivered his first discourse. The Buddha subsequently established a Sangha (order) of both Bhikkus (monks) and Bhikkhunis (nuns).

The Buddha's ministry lasted for forty five years. He died at the age of Eighty on the Full Moon day of May 543 BC (according to some schools of Buddhism) in the Sala Grove at Kusinara. This is known as the Parinibbana of the Buddha.

THE COUNCILS

Councils of Enlightened Bhikkus (arahats) were held three months, 100 years and 236 years after the death of Buddha. At the First Council of the Tipitaka (Teachings) were recited. A further Council of arahats was held in the first century BC in Sri Lanka, and the Tipitaka was committed to writing. One of the authors (venerable Balangoda Ananda Maitreya) actively participated in the sixth and last Buddha Sangha Council held in Burma in the 1950's.

SCHOOLS OF EARLY BUDDHISM

After the death of the Buddha eighteen schools of early Buddhism developed. Of these only Theravada (The Teachings of the Elders) survives today.

THE GREATER VEHICLE (MAHAYANA)

In the first century A.D., Mahayana Buddhism developed as a separate tradition. It was known to its adherents as the Greater Vehicle, in contrast to the contemporary monastic based Buddhism, which the Mahayanists named the Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle).

The Mahayanists adopted Sanscrit as its language. The Bodhisattva (Pali Bodhisatta) ideal emerged of a person who refuses to enter nirvana (Pali Nibbana), but instead returns to samsara to help others. Compassion and wisdom became the most important virtues. The role of lay people was developed.

THE DIAMOND VEHICLE OR TANTRA (VAJRAYANA)

Tantra emerged between the 3rd and 7th centuries A.D. Tantra involves a rapid attainment of Buddhahood through specialized forms of meditation which make wide use of visualization and images.

THE SPREAD OF BUDDHISM FROM INDIA

1) The Southern Transmission

Buddhism spread into Burma, Indonesia, Kampuchea, Laos, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Theravada Buddhism is often known as the Southern School.

2) The Northern Transmission

Mayhayana Buddhism spread initially along the North-Western frontier and the Silk Road. It reached Bhutan, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Nepal, Tibet, USSR, and Vietnam.

3) Buddhism in the West

In the 19th Century, European Scholars started to study Buddhism. Buddhism has spread greatly since 1945, partly because of the work of expatriate communities and partly because of indigenous interest.



THE THREE BASIC FACTS OF EXISTENCE

“Whether the Tathagatas (Buddhas) appear or not, O Bhikkus (monks), it remains a fact, an established principle, a natural law that all conditioned things are transient (anicca), sorrowful (dukkha) and that everything is without a self (anatta).” (*Sutta Pitaka*)

The Three Basic Facts of Existence are also known as the Three Characteristics, the Three Signata or the Three Signs. The formula for the Three Basic Facts given in verses 277-9 of the *Dhammapada* is:

Sabbe sankhara anicca	all conditioned things are impermanent, transient
Sabbe sankhara dukka	all conditioned things are sorrowful, unsatisfactory
Sabbe dhamma anatta	all phenomena are without ego, self, or substance

THE THREE BASIC FACTS OR CHARACTERISTICS (TI LAKKHANA)

1) ANICCA	impermanence, transience, transitoriness
2) DUKKHA	sorrowfulness, suffering, unsatisfactoriness
3) ANATTA	egolessness, impersonality, non-ego, non-self, unsubstantiality

1) ANICCA (IMPERMANENCE, TRANSCIENCE, TRANSITORINESS)

“Impermanency is the rising, passing away and changing of things, or the disappearance of things that have become or arisen. The meaning is that these things never persist in the same way, but that they are dissolving and vanishing from moment to moment.” (*Visuddhi Magga*)

2) DUKKHA (SORROWFULNESS, SUFFERING, UNSATISFACTORINESS)

Dukkha is the unsatisfactoriness nature of all conditioned phenomena. These are all liable to suffering because of their impermanence.

“Birth is suffering, decay is suffering, disease is suffering, death 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.” (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta, Sutta Pitaka*) (The first discourse of the Buddha)

3) ANATTA (EGOLESSNESS, IMPERSONALITY, NON-EGO, NON-SELF, UNSUBSTANTIBILITY)

There is no self-existing, real ego-identity, nor a soul, nor any other abiding substance.

The Buddha is known as Anatta-vadi (the teacher of impersonality) since this is a teaching unique to Buddhism.

FIVE AGGREGATES, GROUPS OF CLINGING OR EXISTENCE (FIVE UPADANA-KKHANDHA)

According to Buddhist teaching the so-called being consists of five khandas or aggregates:

- 1) rupa-kkhandha aggregate of matter (compared to a lump of froth)**
- 2) vedana-kkhandha aggregate of feelings (compared to a bubble)**
- 3) sanna-kkhandha aggregate of perceptions, memories (compared to a mirage)**
- 4) sankhara-kkhandha aggregate of mental formations, states (banana tree trunk)**
- 5) vinnana-kkhandha aggregate of consciousness (a conjuring trick)**

All physical and mental phenomena are included in these five aggregates.

ANNATTA LAKKHANA SUTTA (*SUTTA PITAKA*)

This is the second discourse of the Buddha. The Buddha asks his first five disciples:

“What do you think, O monks: Is this body permanent or impermanent? Impermanent Lord. Are feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness, permanent or impermanent? Impermanent Lord.

But that which is impermanent, is it something pleasant or painful? It is painful, Lord.

But, of what is impermanent, painful and transitory, could it rightly be said “This belongs to me, this I am, this is Ego? No Lord.

Therefore whatever there is of corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness, whether past, present, future, one’s own or external, gross or subtle, low or high, far or near, of all these things one should understand, according to reality and true wisdom “This does not belong to me, this I am not, this is not my ego.”

UNDERSTANDING AND MEDITATING ON THE THREE BASIC FACTS

“Existence can be understood only if these Three Basic Facts are comprehended, and this is not only logically, but in confrontation with one’s own experience. Insight –wisdom (vipassana-panna) which is the ultimate liberating factor in Buddhism, consists just of this experience of the Three Characteristics applied to one’s own bodily and mental processes and deepened and matured in meditation...To “see things as they really are” means seeing them consistently in the light of the Three Characteristics.” (Nyanaponika, *The Three Basic Facts of Existence: I, Impermanence* Collected Essays *Wheel* No 186-7)

Vipassana (insight) “is the intuitive light flashing forth and exposing the truth of the impermanency, the suffering and the impersonal and unsubstantial nature of all corporeal and mental phenomena of existence.” (Nyanatiloka, *Buddhist Dictionary*)



BUDDHIST MEDITATION

The Pali word for bhavana means culture or mental development, “Buddistbhavana...is mental culture in full sense of the term. It aims at cleansing the mind of impurities and disturbances, such as lustful desires, hatred, ill-will, indolence, worries and restlessness, skeptical doubts, and cultivating such qualities as concentration, awareness, intelligence, will, energy, the analytical faculty, confidence, joy, tranquility, leading finally to attainment of highest wisdom which sees the nature of things as they are, and realizes the Ultimate Truth, Nibbana.” (Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*)

In Buddhism there are two kinds of meditation:

1) samatha-bhavana

Samatha is the development of one-pointedness of mind and concentration. Samadhi is the concentrated, peaceful, still and unshaken state of mind.

2) vipassana-bhavana

Vipassana is the intuitive insight into the nature of things and leads to the realization of nibbana (enlightenment).

MEDITATION SHOULD ALWAYS BE STUDIED UNDER A QUALIFIED TEACHER!

**DIVINE ABODES/SUBLIME STATES (BRAHMAVIHARAS)
BOUNDLESS STATES/ILLIMITABLES (APPAMANNA)**

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1) Metta | loving kindness (direct enemy hatred, indirect enemy affection) |
| 2) Karuna | compassion (direct enemy cruelty, indirect enemy passionate grief) |
| 3) Mudita | sympathetic joy (direct enemy attachment and aversion, indirect enemy callousness) |

Metta bhavana is frequently practiced as a form of samatha meditation.

“Metta should be practiced first towards oneself. In doing so a person should charge his mind and body with positive thoughts of peace and happiness. He should think how he could be peaceful, happy, free from suffering, worry and anger. He then becomes the embodiment of loving kindness. Shielded by loving kindness, he cuts off all hostile vibrations and negative thoughts. He returns good for evil, love for anger. He becomes ever tolerant and tries his best not to give occasion for anger to any. Himself beaming with happiness, he injects happiness into others not only inwardly but also outwardly by putting his metta into practice in the course of his daily life. When he is full of peace and is free from thoughts of hatred, it is easy for him to radiate loving kindness towards others. What he does not possess he cannot give to others. Before he tries to make others happy he should first be happy himself. He should know the ways and means to make himself happy.” (Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*)

MEDITATION ON BREATHING (ANAPANA SATI)

Meditation on the breath can be used to develop samadhi and vipassana.

DEVELOPMENT OF CONCENTRATION (SAMATHA)

“He may watch his inhalation and exhalation at the start. By no means should he force breath in or out. He should just be aware of his breath as it passes in and out while letting the breath go in and out automatically in its own way. He has only to be watchful, mindful, and attentive to it. If he is a long-nosed person, the breath will touch his upper lip first. He should fix his mind and attention on the spot the breath first touches, the tip of the nose or the upper lip, as the case may be...To be conscious and mindful of, or attentive to, one’s breath is the preliminary step of this practice...” (Balangoda Ananda Maitreya, *Meditation on Breathing*)

INSIGHT-DEVELOPMENT (VIPASSANA)

“Some meditators practice vipassana (insight-development) from the beginning. They do not try to attain ecstatic trances. They start with being mindful of inhalation and exhalation. Then by counting breaths...they develop concentration and mindfulness. Next, they stop counting and develop mindfulness over extension of breaths both long and short, and then contemplate over the start, middle and end of inhalations and exhalations. They examine the feelings that arise at the breath’s first touch on the tip of the nose or upper lip and see impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and egolessness of feelings. Then they examine the consciousness (mind-unit), perception (sanna) and other mental factors (sankhara) that arise together with the feeling and see that all of them are impermanent, and therefore not satisfactory, and

insubstantial (egoless).” (Balangoda Ananda Maitreya, *Meditation on Breathing*)

MEDITATION IN DAILY LIFE (BHAVANA)

“Another very important, practical, and useful form of ‘meditation’ (mental development) is to be aware and mindful of whatever you do, physically or verbally, during the daily routine of work in your life, private, public or professional. Whether you walk, stand, sit, lie down, or sleep, whether you stretch or bend your limbs, whether you look around, whether you put on your clothes, whether you talk or keep silence, whether you eat or drink, even whether you answer the calls of nature—in these and other activities, you should be fully aware and mindful of the act you perform at the moment. That is to say, you should live in the present moment, in the present action. That does not mean that you should not think of the past or the future at all. On the contrary, you should think of them in relation to the present moment, the present action, when and where it is relevant.” (Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*)



THE BUDDHIST TEACHING OF KAMMA AND REBIRTH

“Owners of their karmas are the beings, heirs of their kamma, the kamma is the womb from which they have sprung, kamma is their refuge.” (*Sutta Pitaka*)

KAMMA

The Buddha said “Volition (Cetana) is kamma. Having willed one’s acts by body, speech and thought.” (*Sutta Pitaka*) Kamma is all moral and immoral volition and intentional action, mental (thought), verbal (word) and physical (deed). Involuntary and unintentional actions are not kamma, because volition is not present. Kamma is action, and vipaka (fruit or result) is its reaction. Wholesome kamma gives rise to wholesome vipaka, and unwholesome kamma gives rise to unwholesome vipaka. “Not knowing things as they truly are does one accumulate kamma. No kamma is accumulated by one who has completely eradicated craving and has understood things as they truly are. Ignorance (avijja) and craving (tanha) are the chief causes of kamma.” (Narada, *A Manual of Buddhism*) Action has three unwholesome (akusala) roots (mula/hetu) greed (lobha), hatred (dosa) and elusion (moha), and three wholesome (kusala) roots, greedlessness (alobha), hatelessness (adosa) and undeludedness (amoha).

The Buddhist doctrine of anatta (non-self) shows that there is no person who produces kamma or receives vipaka. “Volition or will (cetana) is itself the doer” of kamma. (Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*) There is “no doer over and above the doing, no experiencer of the result over and above the occurrence of the result.” (*Visuddhi Magga*)

WHOLSOME COURSE OF ACTION, MERITORIOUS ACTIONS

- 1) Generosity
- 2) Morality
- 3) Meditation
- 4) Reverence
- 5) Service
- 6) Transference of merit
- 7) Rejoicing in other’s merit
- 8) Hearing the Doctrine

KUSLALA KAMMA

- Dana
- Sila
- Bhavana
- Apacayana
- Veyyavacca
- Pattidana
- Pattanumodana
- Dhammasavana

9) Expounding the Doctrine (Dhamma)
10) Straightening one's own views
UNWHOLESOME COURSE OF ACTION

Dhammadesana
Ditthijjukamma
AKUSLALA KAMMA

1) Killing
2) Stealing
3) Sexual Misconduct and abuse of the senses
4) Lying
5) Slandering
6) Harsh Speech
7) Frivolous talk
8) Covetousness
9) Ill-will
10) False View

Panatipata
Adinnadana
Kamesumicchacara
Musavada
Pisunavaca
Pharusavaca
Samphappalapa
Abhijjha
Vyapada
Micchaditthi

REBIRTH

“Kamma necessarily leads to rebirth. Past kamma conditions the present birth, and present kamma, in combination with past kamma, the future...kamma, which is rooted in ignorance, is the cause of birth and death. As long as this kammic force survives there is rebirth.” (Narada, *A Manual of Buddhism*)

“Birth...is the arising of the khandas (aggregates)...Death...is the cessation of the psycho-physical life of any one individual existence...the kammic force remains undisturbed by the disintegration of the physical body, and the passing away of the present consciousness leads to arising of a fresh one in another birth...The continuity of the flux, at death, is unbroken in point of time, and there is no breach in the stream of consciousness...The body dies and it's kammic force is reborn in another without anything transmigrating from this life to the other. The last thought-moment of this life perishes conditioning another thought-moment in a subsequent life, this new being is neither absolutely the same—since it has changed—nor totally different—being the same stream of kammic energy. There is merely a continuity of a particular life-flux.” (Narada, *The Buddha and his Teachings*)

DEPENDENT ARISING/ORIGINATION (PATICCASAMUPPADA)

Dependent on ignorance (avijja) arise kamma formations/activities (sankhara)
Dependent on kamma formations arises rebirth-consciousness (patibandhi vinnana)
Dependent on rebirth-consciousness arise mind and matter (nama-rupa)
Dependent on mind and matter arise the six spheres of sense/bases (salayatana)
Dependent on the six spheres of sense arises the contact/impression (phassa)
Dependent on contact arises feeling (vedana)
Dependent on feeling arises craving (tanha)
Dependent on craving arises grasping/clinging/attachment (upadana)
Dependent on grasping/clinging arises action/becoming (kamma bhava)

Dependent on actions/becoming arises birth (i.e. rebirth) (jati)

Dependent on rebirth arise decay and death (jara marana)

THE FIVE ORDERS, PROCESSES OR UNIVERSAL LAWS (NIYAMAS)

- 1) Utu Niyama** **physical inorganic order (e.g. seasons)**
- 2) Bija Niyama** **physical organic order, order of germs and seeds**
- 3) Kamma Niyama** **order of action and result (actions produce results)**
- 4) Citta Niyama** **order of mind or psychic law (e.g. process of consciousness)**
- 5) Dhamma Niyama** **order of the norm (e.g. gravitation)**



SUMMING UP

“By oneself alone is evil done: by oneself is one defiled. By oneself alone is evil avoided; by oneself alone is one purified. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. No one can purify another.” (*Dhammapada*, verse 165)

BUDDHISM AS A RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

“The question has often been asked: Is Buddhism a religion or a philosophy? It does not matter what you call it. Buddhism remains what it is whatever the label you may put on it. The label is immaterial. Even the label ‘Buddhism’ which we give to the teaching of the Buddha is of little importance. The name one gives it is inessential.” (Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*)

BUDDHISM AND RELIGION

“Buddhism is not strictly a religion in the sense in which that word is commonly understood, for it is not a system of faith and worship, owing any allegiance to a supernatural God. Buddhism does not demand blind faith from its adherents. Hence mere belief is dethroned and for it is substituted ‘confidence based on knowledge’.” (Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*)

“Buddhism cannot...be strictly called a religion, because it is neither a system of faith and worship, nor the ‘outward act or form by which men indicate their recognition of the existence of a God or Gods having power over their own destiny to whom obedience, service and honour are due’...However, if, by religion, is meant ‘a teaching which takes a view of life which is more than superficial, a teaching which looks into life and not merely at it, a teaching which furnishes men with a guide to conduct that is in accord with this in-look, a teaching which enables those who give it heed to face life with fortitude and death with serenity,’ or a system of deliverance from the ills of life, then certainly Buddhism is a religion of religions.” (Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*)

BUDDHISM AND PHILOSOPHY

“Buddhism...cannot be strictly called a philosophy because it is not merely the ‘love of, inducing the search after, wisdom.’ Nor is Buddhism ‘a hypothetical

interpretation of the unknown (as in metaphysics), or of the inexactly known (as in ethics or political philosophy’). If by philosophy is meant an ‘inquiry not so much after certain particular facts as after the fundamental character of this world in which we find ourselves, and of the kind of life which such a world it behooves us to live,’ Buddhism may approximate a philosophy, but it is very much more comprehensive. Philosophy deals mainly with knowledge and is not concerned with practice; whereas Buddhism lays special emphasis on practice and realization...In one sense Buddhism is not a philosophy, in another sense it is the philosophy of philosophies.” (Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*)

WHAT BUDDHISM IS

“Buddhism is neither a metaphysical path nor a ritualistic path.
It is neither skeptical nor dogmatic.
It is neither eternalism nor nihilism.
It is neither self-mortification nor self-indulgence.
It is neither pessimism nor optimism but realism.
It is neither absolutely this-worldly nor other-worldly.
It is not extrovert but introvert.
It is not theo-centric but homo-centric.
It is a unique Path of Enlightenment.”
(Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*)

CLASSES AND ACTIVITIES AT THE BUDDHIST SOCIETY

The Introducing Buddhism course gives a brief overview of some of the most important Buddhist doctrines common to most schools of Buddhism. Much Buddhist doctrine is common to all schools but there are differences. (For example, in the Theravada school, the Buddha is known as Buddha Gotama, whereas in the Mahayana tradition he is known as Sakyamuni Buddha. Different schools give different dates for the life of Buddha. The Introducing Buddhism course mainly uses the Pali language whereas *some* other courses mainly use the Sanskrit language. Some words are the same in both languages (for example, rupa, samsara), but other words are different (for example, dukkha and duhkha, nibbana and nirvana).)

The Buddhist Society offers other classes (for members only). Having followed the Introducing Buddhism course, the member should be in a good position to select which class to join. The Buddhist Society also offers a correspondence course and public lectures.

OTHER BUDDHIST GROUPS AND CENTRES

Other Buddhist groups and centres in the United Kingdom offer classes and Buddhist activities and functions. Many of these are listed in the *Buddhist Directory* published by the Buddhist Society.

MEDITATION CLASSES AND INSTRUCTION

Those who wish to learn how to meditate are strongly advised to study under an authorized and qualified teacher. Meditation classes are held at the Buddhist Society. Students of Meditation should always ask the teacher about any difficulties or queries which may arise.



Buddhist Literature

Students of the Introducing Buddhism Course are advised to discuss further reading with the teachers at the Buddhist Society.

LIBRARIES

The Buddhist Society has a library for use by members. There are several other Buddhist libraries in the U.K. including:

The Christmas Humphreys Memorial Library, Amaravati Buddhist Centre, Great Gaddesden, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 3BZ (044-284-2455)

BOOKSELLERS

Books on Buddhism are available from many sources including:

London Buddhist Vihara Bookstall, 5 Heathfield Gardens, Chiswick, London, W4 4JU (01-995-9493)

Probsthain and Co., 41 Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3PH (01-636-1096)

Watkins Books, 19 Cecil Court, London, WC2N 4HB (01-836-2182)

BOOKS

The following books are recommended as suitable introductions to Buddhism:

General and Basic

Venerable, Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (Gordon Fraser, 1978, 0-86092-005-4)

Venerable Saddhatissa, *The Buddha's Way* (George Allen and Unwin, 1985, 0-04-294071-0)

Venerable Saddhatissa, *Buddhist Ethics* (Wisdom Publications, 1987, 0-86171-053-3)

Venerable Saddhatissa, *The Life of the Buddha* (Unwin, 1976, 0-04-294093-1)

Irmgard Schoegl (Myokyo-ni), *Introducing Buddhism* (The Zen Centre, 1978)

REFERENCE

Christmas Humphreys, *A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism* (Curzon, 1984, 0-7007-0184-2)

John Smelling, *The Buddhist Handbook* (Rider, 1987, 0-7126-1554-7)

THERAVADA BUDDHISM

***The Dhammapada* (translated by Venerable Balangoda Ananda Maitreya) (Novato California, Lotsawa Press, 1988, 0-932156-04-5)**

***The Dhammapada* (translated by Venerable Narada) (Colombo, Vajirarama, 1972)**

Jack Kornfield and Paul Breiter, *A Still Forest Pool: The Insight Meditation of Achaan Chaa* (Quest Book, Theosophical Publishing House, 1985, 0-8356-0597-3)

Ayya Khemma, *Being Nobody, Going Nowhere* (Wisdom Publications, 1987, 0-86171-052-5)

Venerable Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings* (Colombo, Vajirarama, 1980)

Venerable Narada, *Buddhism in a Nutshell* (Kandy, Buddhist Publication Society, 1975)

Venerable Nyanaponika, *The Heart of Buddhist Meditation* (Rider, 1983, 0-09-152331-1)

TIBETAN BUDDHISM

Stephen Batchelor, *The Jewel in the Lotus: A Guide to the Buddhist Traditions of Tibet* (Wisdom Publications, 1987, 0-86171-048-7)

Chogyam Trungpa, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* (Shambala Publications, 1973, 0-87773-050-4)

Lama Yeshe, *Introduction to Tantra* (Wisdom Publications, 1976, 0-86171-021-5)

Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, *Wisdom Energy* (Wisdom Publications, 1976, 0-86171-008-8)

ZEN BUDDHISM

Irmgard Schoegl, *The Zen Way* (The Zen Centre, 1977, 0-85969-098-9)

D.T. Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (Rider, 1983, 09-151121-6)

D.T. Suzuki, *Living by Zen* (Rider, 1986, 0-09-149981-X)

Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind* (Wetherill, 1970, 0-8348-0079-9)



GLOSSARY

PALI	ENGLISH	SANSKRIT
abhijjha	covetousness	abdhidhya
adinnadana	stealing	adattadana
adosa	hatelessness	advesa
ajiva	livelihood	ajiva
akusala	unwholesomeness	akusala
alobha	greedlessness	alobha
amoha	undeludeedness	amoha
anapana	mediatation on breating	anapana smrti
anatta	non-self/egolessness	anatman
anatta-vadi	teacher of non-self (Buddha)	anatma-vadin
anicca	impermanence/transience	anitya

PALI	ENGLISH	SANSKRIT
apacayana	reverence	apacayana
appamana	boundless states/illimitables	apramana
arahat	enlightened disciple	arhat
ariya	noble	arya
ariya attingika magga	noble eightfold path	arya –astangika-marga
ariya sacca	noble truths (four)	aryastya
attingika magga	eightfold path	astangika-marga
avijja	ignorance	avidya
ayatana	sense base	ayatana
bhagavat	exalted/blessed/worthy one	bhagavant
bhava	becoming	bhava
bhavana	meditation/mental development	bhavana
Bhikkhu	Buddhist monk	Bhikshu
Bhikkhuni	Buddhist nun	Bhikshui
Bija niyama	physical organic order	vija-niyama
bohdi	enlightenment	bodhi
Bodhisatta	future Buddha	Bodhisattva
Buddha	discoverer of Dhamma	Buddha
Buddha Gotama	historical Buddha	Buddha Gautama
Buddha Gotama	historical Buddha	Sakyamuni Buddha
cetana	volition/will	cetana
citta niyama	order of mind/psychic law	citta-niyama
dana	generosity	dana
Dhamma	doctrine/teaching	Dharma
dhamma	mental object/phenomena	dharma
dhamma niyama	order of the norm	dharma-niyama
dhammasavana	heart of the Dhammas	dharma-sravana
dhammadesana	expounding the Dhamma	dharma-desana
ditthi	view/understanding	drsti
ditthijjukamma	straightening one's view	drstyujuh-karma
dosa	hatred	dvesa
dukkha	suffering/unsatisfactoriness	duhkha
dukkha-dukkha	intrinsic/ordinary suffering	duhkha-duhkha
gacchami	I go to	
gami	leading to	
hetu	root	hetu
jara marana	decay and death	jaramarana
jati	birth	jati
jhana	absorption (in meditation)	dhyana

PALI	ENGLISH	SANSKRIT
kamesumicchacara	sexual misconduct	kamamithycara
kamma	action	karma
kamma bhava	actions/becoming	karma-bhava
kamma niyama	order of action & results	karma-niyama
kammanta	action	karmanta
karuna	compassion	karuna
khandha	aggregate/group	skandha
kusala	wholesome	kusala
lakkhana	characteristics	laksana
lobha	greed	lobha
magga	path	marga
majjhima patipada	middle path	madhyama-pratipad
metta	loving kindness	maitri
micchaditthi	false view	mithyadrsti
mocha	delusion	moha
mudita	sympathetic joy	mudita
mula	root	mula
musavada	lying	mrsavada
nama-rupa	mind and matter	nama-rupa
namo	homage/reverence/salutation	namo
nibbana	enlightenment	nirvana
nirodha	cessation/extinction	nirodha
niyama	order/process/universal law	niyama
panatipata	killng	pranatipata
panna	wisdom	prajna
pannakkhandha	wisdom group	prajna-skandha
parinibbana of Budha	death of Buddha	parinirvana of Buddha
paticcasamuppada	dependent arising/origination	pratityasamutpada
patipada	path	pratipada
patisandhi vinnana	rebirth-consciousness	pratisandhi-vijnana
pattanumodana	rejoicing in others merit	
pattidana	transference of merit	
pharusavaca	harsh speech	parusya
phassa	contact	sparsa
pisunavaca	slandering	paisunya
pitaka	basket of scriptures	pitaka
rupa	corporeality/matter	rupa
rupa-kkhandha	aggregate of matter	rupa-skandha

PALI	ENGLISH	SANSKRIT
sabbe	all	sarva
sacca	truth	satya
salayatana	six sense bases	sadayatana
samadhi	concentration	samadhi
samadhikkhandha	concentration group	Samadhi-skandha
samatha	concentration	samatha
samatha-bhavana	concentration meditation	samatha-bhavana
samkappa	thoughts	samkalpa
samsara	round of rebirth	samsara
samma	right/fully	samyak
samma-sambuddha	fully self-enlightened one (Buddha)	samyak-sambuddha
samphappalapa	frivolous talk	sambhinnapralapa
samudaya	origin	samudaya
Sangha	order of monks and nuns	Samgha
sankhara	kamma formations	samskara
sankhara	mental formations/states	samskara
sankhara-dukkha	suffering (conditioned)	samskara-duhkha
sanna	perceptions/memories	samjnam
sanna-kkhandha	aggregate of perceptions	samjna-skandha
sutta	discourse	sutra
tanha	craving	trsna
Tathagata	Buddha	Tahtagata
ti-lakkhana	3 characteristics of existence	tri-laksana
tipitaka	Buddhist Scriptures/canon	tripitaka
Tiratana	Triple Gem	Tri-ratna
upadana	grasping/clinging/attachment	upadana
upekkha	equanimity	upeksa
utu niyama	physical inorganic order	rtu-niyama
vaca	speech	vak
vayama	effort	vyayama
vedana	feeling	vedana
vedana-kkhandha	aggregate of feelings	vedana-skandha
veyyavacca	service	vaiyavrtya
vihara	monastery	vihara
vinnana	consciousness	vijnana
vinnana-kkhandha	aggregate of consciousness	vijnana-skandha
vipaka	fruit/result	vipaka
viparinama-dukkha	suffering (due to change)	viparinama-duhkha
vipassana	insight	vipasyana/vidarsana
vipassana-bhavana	insight meditation	vipasyana-bhavana
vipassana-panna	insight-wisdom	vipasyana-prajna
vyapada	ill-will	vyapada

OTHER TERMS

Brahmin	High/priestly caste Hindu
Dhammapada	Path/Way of Dhamma (book)
Hinayana	Lesser Vehicle
Mahayana	Greater Vehicle
Pali	Language of Theravada scriptures
Sakya	Buddha's clan
Sanskrit	Language of Mahayana scriptures
Tantra	Form of Buddhism which makes extensive use of the creative imagination
Theravada	A school of Buddhism (Teachings of the Elders)
Vajrayana	Diamond Vehicle
Visuddhi Magga	Path of Purification (book)
Yana	Vehicle



THE REFUGES AND PRECEPTS

Homage (VANDANA)

Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa!
(Homage to Him, the Exalted, the worthy, the fully Enlightened one!)

THE THREE REFUGES (TISARNA)

Buddham saranam gacchami:
(I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.)
Dhammam saranam gacchami:
(I go to the Doctrine as my Refuge.)
Sangham saranam gacchami:
(I go to the Order for my Refuge.)
Dutiyam pi Buddham saranam gacchami:
(For the second time, I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.)
Dutiyam pi Dhammam saranam gacchami:
(For the second time, I go to the Doctrine as my Refuge.)
Dutiyam pi Sangham saranam gacchami:
(For the second time, I go to the Order for my Refuge.)
Tatiyam pi Buddham saranam gacchami:
(For the third time, I go to the Buddha as my Refuge.)
Tatiyam pi Dhammam saranam gacchami:
(For the third time, I go to the Doctrine as my Refuge.)
Tatiyam pi Sangham saranam gacchami:
(For the third time, I go to the Order for my Refuge.)

THE FIVE PRECEPTS

Panatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami
(I undertake to the rule of training to refrain from killing or injury to living things.)
Adinnadana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami
(I undertake to the rule of training to refrain from taking that which is not given.)
Kamesu micchachara veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami
(I undertake to the rule of training to refrain from excessive sensuality.)
Musavada veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami
(I undertake to the rule of training to refrain from false and harmful speech.)
Sura – meraya- majja pamadatthana veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami
(I undertake to the rule of training to refrain from drinks and drugs which fuddle the mind and reduce mindfulness.)



THE DISCOURSE ON LOVING KINDNESS (Metta Sutta, Sutta Pitaka)

(Translation by H.J. Russell-Williams, President of The Buddhist Society of Manchester and the Buddhist Group of Kendai (Theravada). Reproduced with permission)

This is what should be accomplished by one who is wise, who seeks the good and would obtain peace.

Let him be strenuous, upright and sincere, without pride, (easily) contented and joyous; let him not be submerged by things of the world; let him not take upon himself the burden of riches; let his senses be controlled; let him be wise but not puffed-up, and let him not desire possessions even for his family.

Let him do nothing that is meant or that the wise would reprove.

**May all beings be happy,
May they be joyous and live in safety,
All living beings, whether weak or strong,
In high or middle or low realms of existence
Small or great, visible or invisible, near or far,
Born or to be born, May all beings be happy.**

Even as a mother at the risk of her life watches over and protects her only child, so with a boundless mind should one cherish all living things, suffusing love over the entire world, above, below and all around without limit. So let him cultivate an infinite goodwill toward the whole world.

Standing or walking, sitting or lying down, during all his waking hours let him cherish the thought that this way of living is the best in the world. Abandoning vain discussion, having a clear vision freed from sense appetites, he who is made perfect will never again know rebirth.