

# Four Noble Truths : Path Leading to Cessation of Suffering

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## Abstracts

The main objective of the academic article was to study the Buddhist principle of Four Noble Truths (Ariyasacca) as an absolute path leading a man, regarded as a traveler in the cycle of transmigration (Saṅsāravatṭa), to the cessation of suffering. The process of the study was conducted to describe in details by separating Ariyasacca into four sectors: suffering (Dukkha), the origin of suffering (Samudaya), the cessation of suffering (Nirodha) and the path leading to the cessation of suffering (Magga). The suffering consisted of two types: physical and mental. However, the suffering resulted from all defilements was counted as the suffering in Buddhism, which was summarized by the Buddha that all the five aggregates were sufferings. Having been known by a person, suffering was taught not to cling to or not to adhere to, but the true cause of suffering, regarded as a severe problem of human life, was taught to penetrate profoundly to discover problem resolutions. In conclusion, craving (Taṇha), described as craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence and craving for non-existence or self-annihilation, was called the origin of suffering. When the causes of suffering were absolutely perceived, discontinuance of suffering became possible, and it was confirmed by the Buddha. In addition, the Noble Eightfold Path was directed to lead a certain person to the end of suffering. This path comprised of the principles to develop a person's wisdom and thought, the principles to control human physical and verbal behaviours, and to earn a good livelihood, and the principles to develop human minds. According to distinct sections of Ariyasacca, it was separately found different, but it was holistic as a whole because an individual had to follow each of Four Noble Truths in a certain different way. In the end, whoever followed the noble truth, like a traveler with a map in hands, attained the release from suffering. Besides, he also got by himself an appropriate way to follow the noble truth, especially the noble path or Ariyamagga, which was inevitably called the straightforward way to the suffering extinction. Specifically, the follower with sound belief in the Buddha's teaching reached only his real destination as desired.

**Keywords:** Four Noble Truths; Suffering; Noble Eightfold Path

## Introduction

Ariyasacca (The Four Noble Truths) was the most important teaching in Buddhism as it was proclaimed and confirmed by the Buddha himself as the core of all Buddhas' enlightenment. It was described that whoever enlightened by himself until he called himself Buddha penetrated into the Four Noble Truths: the suffering (Dukkha), the origin of suffering (Samudaya), the cessation of suffering (Nirodha), and the path leading to the cessation of suffering (Magga), through the Enlightenment. Whenever this principle was clearly realized, the person conceiving the reality was released from all sufferings by rooting out craving

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\* Received: October 2, 2020; Revised: November 14, 2020; Accepted: December 30, 2020

(Taṇhā), which was regarded as the cause leading all beings to existence (Bhava) by birth (Jāti) and pulling all beings into the consecutive cycle of suffering forever and ever.

## **Dukkha: Suffering and Unsatisfactoriness**

### **1. Definition and Meaning**

In Buddhism, there were several words involved with suffering, including other words with the similar and congruent context. These words like Dukkha, Dukkhatā, Dukkhalakkhaṇa, etc., were said together because they were related to each other in various dimensions.

In Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta on the First Sermon, Mahāvagga Part I, Vinaya Pitaka Vol. 4, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 4 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 a: 16), and in the first Tathāgata Sutta, Dhammacakkappavattana Vagga II on the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion, Mahāvāra Vagga, Samyutta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 11, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 19 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 e: 419), the suffering was concluded by the Buddha in the following “Saṅkhittena Pañcupādānakkhandhā Dukkhā,” which was translated “In brief, the five aggregates of existence subject to clinging were suffering.”

The meaning of suffering was described as suffering and unsatisfactoriness because of difficulty in forbearance by Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krommaphraya Vajirañāṇavarorasa (1968: 41) in Navakovāda, the Curriculum of Basic-Level Dhamma Studies.

The meaning of suffering and other words related to suffering (Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto, 2016 b: 135-136) was described as (1) the state of suffering or being oppressed because it was afflicted by birth and death as a result from causal factors and not itself (It meant Dukkham in the Three Characteristics (Tilakkhaṇa), (2) the state of suffering that arose or might arise to a person (It meant Dukkhasacca or Dukkhaariyasacca in the Four Noble Truths), and (3) the state of non-forbearance or displeasure, painful feeling (Dukkhavedanā), mental pain or grief (Domanasa). Generally, Dukkha was the bodily pain or discomfort whereas Domanasa was mental pain or displeasure; Dukkha in the Three Feelings (Vedanā) meant both bodily and mental pain.

In Visuddhimagga, the term ‘Dukkha’ was interpreted into four following meanings (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto), 2017: 74-75):

1. Abhiñhasampatipīlanto – It was suffering because it was under oppression all the time from occurrence, deterioration, and disintegration. It was suffering because it was always afflicted by involved factors or conditions that occurred, degenerated and brake individually.

2. Dukkhamato – It was suffering because of its natural state of non-forbearance or non-durability. It meant that the state of everything was naturally not ever-lasting, it had to be changed, fluctuated, altered and deteriorated due to occurrence and decomposition.

3. Dukkhavatthuto – It was suffering because it was the base of suffering, the receptacle of all states of distress. Whenever those states of hardship gave rise to people, they felt oppressed or suffered.

4. Sukhapaṭikkhepato – It was suffering because it was against happiness. The natural state of everything was under oppression of various factors or conditions until it was unable to exist; therefore, it unconsciously objected or obstructed the state of easiness, smoothness and comfortability.

In the commentary of Paṭisambhidāmagga, the meaning of ‘Suffering in the Three Characteristics’ was described as what was harmful whereas ‘Suffering in the Four Noble Truths’ was with four meanings: (1) being oppressed, (2) being conditioned or compounded,

(3) being anxious or worried, (4) being varied or alterative. (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto), 2017: 76-77).

## 2. Types of Suffering

There were several categories or types of suffering in Tripitaka. The term 'Dukkha' was referred to the state of non-toleration, suffering or unsatisfactoriness and divided into two kinds: (1) bodily pain or physical suffering (Kāyika-dukkha), and (2) mental pain or mental suffering (Cetasika-dukkha). (Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto, 2016 a: 63).

In Mahādukkhakkhadha Sutta on an enormous pile of suffering and Cūḍādukkhakkhandha Sutta on a small bit of suffering, Mūlapaññāsaka, Macchima Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 4, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 12 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 c: 114-122, 123-129), the Buddha said of several kinds of suffering, additionally explained by Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto) (2017 : 87), "The Buddha informed several aggregates of suffering as follows:

- 1) Discomfort, hardship, and grievance, including death, due to working to earn a living.
- 2) Sorrow and sadness when the failure occurred in a person's life even though he tried his best to get success.
- 3) Worry and distress when wealth successfully arose from a person's attempt and he was anxious of guarding, protecting and taking care of his own property.
- 4) Depressiveness and lamentation when wealth was definitely lost after his protection of property was failed, or his asset was stolen or burned.
- 5) Suffering from the quarrel, dispute, battery, and assault to death between kings and kings, millionaires and millionaires, parents and sons or daughters, brothers and sisters, and friends.
- 6) Suffering from wars or battles between two sides in the battle fields. Soldiers in the battle got injured and dead from enemies' arms or weapons.
- 7) Suffering from the war since one side got raid by the other side. On the other hand, people seriously suffered from combat or fight with each other.
- 8) Suffering from being arrested, punished and sentenced to death after a person made various types of crime: robbery, sexual abuse, etc.
- 9) Suffering in low states of existence (Apāya) – Apāya, Duggati, Vinipāta and Niraya - after death of a person who made misconduct by body, speech and mind.

In Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta on the First Sermon, Mahāvagga Part I, Vinaya Pitaka Vol. 4, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 4 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 a: 16), and in the first Tathāgata Sutta, Dhammacakkappavattana Vagga II on the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion, Mahāvāra Vagga, Sañiyatta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 11, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 19 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 e: 419), Dukkhasacca or the suffering in the Four Noble Truths comprised of twelve kinds in the Buddha's explanation "Jātipi dukkhā jarāpi dukkhā marañampi dukkham soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassupāyāsāpi dukkhā sañkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā."

The twelve kinds of suffering in the Four Noble Truths were described as follows (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto), 2017: 84 – 85):

1) **Jāti** (birth) was suffering because it was the basis for several kinds of affliction, in which there were sub-kinds of suffering as follows:

1.1) Gabbhokakantimūlaka-dukkha was the suffering of confinement in the womb because a human being as a foetus, like a worm in the rotten thing or in the filthy water, dwells in a very narrow place, cramped, darkened, and congested with repugnant substances.

1.2) *Gabbhapariharanamūlaka-dukkha* was the suffering of a human being from a mother's pregnancy care because the mother's actions such as movement, standing up, sitting down, running, eating, drinking, etc., affected her fetus.

1.3) *Gabbhavipattimūlaka-dukkha* was the suffering of a human being from pregnancy failure like ectopic pregnancy, fetal death, etc.

1.4) *Vijāyanamūlaka-dukkha* was the suffering of a human being from childbirth because he was pounded, hit, turned over, pressed and compressed until he moved through a very narrow hole.

1.5) *Bahinikkhamanamūlaka-dukkha* was the suffering of a human being after childbirth because a new-born baby had very sensitive complexion. He felt painful when he was touched, rubbed, wiped, cleaned and washed.

1.6) *Attupakkamamūlaka-dukkha* was the suffering of a human being from his own action, e.g., masochism, suicide, self-abuse, self-torture, self-torment, etc.

1.7) *Parupakkamamūlaka-dukkha* was the suffering of a human being from other persons' actions such as being killed, being imprisoned, being attacked, etc.

2) **Jarā** (aging) was called as a kind of suffering because it weakens the organs. Such faculties as eyes, ears, a nose, a tongue, etc., functioned defectively, vitality waned, and agility was lost. The complexion was no longer fair and lustrous and the skin wrinkled. The memory became incoherent and faulty. A person's power, internal and external, weakened and the physical and mental distress was caused.

3) **Marāṇa** (death) was regarded as a certain kind of suffering because a sign or an omen of evil actions often appeared to a person who was moribund. At the death's door, a human being would recognize that there would be division ad separation from all that were dear to him and beloved. Big and small organs also stopped functioning. The physical suffering might be enormous but a dying one could not do anything.

4) **Soka** (grief) was counted as the suffering of a human being because sadness occurred when a person's cousin passed away.

5) **Parideva** (lamentation) was also accepted as a kind of suffering, which appeared to a person when his relatives passed away and he was so sad that he couldn't control himself, prattling away and rambling on.

6) **Dukkha** (physical pain) was described as a kind of suffering when a person was injured, wounded, hurt, oppressed and ill.

7) **Domanassa** (distress; anguish) was explained as a kind of suffering, the consequence of which might make a person cry, harm himself, cut himself, take the poison himself, hang himself, etc.

8) **Upāyāsa** (frustration; despair) was the torment of unmitigated grief.

9) **Appiyasampayoga** (association with disagreeable people or things) was counted as the suffering due to the need to engage with a person whom one detested.

10) **Piyavippayoga** (separation from cherished people or things) was referred to the suffering because of disconnection to loved ones, including the loss of possessions.

11) **Icchitālabha** (not obtaining what one wanted) was described as the suffering because of disappointment to gain what one desiderated.

12) **Upādānakkhadhā** (the five aggregates of existence as the foundation for clinging) was held as the suffering because all the above-mentioned suffering derived from the five aggregates. In summary, suffering was the five aggregates as the objects of attachment.

In Visuddhimagga, there were two sets of suffering, each was separately divided into two kinds. Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto) (2017: 86) explained "The first set

of suffering was divided into two kinds: 1) Paṭicchanna-dukkha meant a hidden or concealed suffering, which was easily invisible like an ear ache, a tooth ache, anxiety from lust and hatred, etc. 2) Appaṭicchanna-dukkha was overt or obvious suffering that was clearly visible like being pricked by a thorn, whipped, or cut by a knife, etc. The second set of suffering was divided into two kinds: 1) Pariyāya-dukkha (indirect suffering) was referred to all the above-mentioned suffering but painful feeling (Dukkha-vedanā). 2) Nippariyāya-dukkha (direct suffering) was the painful feeling. It was what was called Dukkha-dukkha or Dukkha-vedanā (displeasing feeling).

In Mūlapanñāsaka, Majjhima Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 4, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 12, the Buddha informed several monks an enormous mountain of suffering in Mahādukkhakhandha Sutta in reference to other ascetics' words, and he explained Sakya King Mahānāma a small pile of suffering in Cūḍadukkakhandha Sutta (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 c: 114 – 122, 123 – 129). In addition,

Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P. A. Payutto), 2017: 87) said that the Buddha explained several examples of suffering that were summarized as follows:

- 1) The suffering of hardship in the life, including loss of life due to one's occupation.
- 2) The suffering of sadness and depression resulting from disappointment when one tries his best to work but he got no wealth.
- 3) The suffering of worriedness about wealth protection after he was successful and got wealthy.
- 4) The suffering of grief from failure of obtained wealth protection or loss of gained possessions due to theft and fire, etc.
- 5) The suffering of dispute or violence to death or serious injury between kings, rulers, householders, parents and children, relatives, siblings, and friends.
- 6) The suffering of slaughter and severe agony between two enemies in the war or battle.
- 7) The suffering of invasion leading to slaughter and severe agony even to evacuation of people from their homeland.
- 8) The suffering from being arrested, convicted and punished to death or severe injury resulting from one's committal of crime like theft, burglary, robbery or adultery.
- 9) The suffering from rebirth in the unhappy states of existence after death, resulting from one's physical misdeeds, verbal and mental.

### **3. Characteristics of Suffering**

In Uppāda Sutta, Eka-duka-tika Nipāta, Aṅguttara Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 12, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 20, the Buddha said "... all conditional states were impermanent ... all conditional states were subject to oppression ... all states were not-self or soulless ..." (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 g: 322-323). It was described that the Buddha demonstrated the Three Characteristics of Existence (Tilakkhaṇa) as the Law of Nature. The term 'Dukkhatā' among the Three Characteristics of Existence was only explained here for deep comprehension in suffering characteristics from various sources.

Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya) (2017: 93) described the term 'Dukkhatā' in Buddhadhamma: The Laws of Nature and Their Benefits to Life as the state of suffering, the condition of oppressed by birth and decay, the inherent stress, resistance and the conflict within an object due to alteration of its determinant factors, preventing it from remaining as it is; the condition of oppression by birth and decay, the inherent stress, resistance and conflict within an object due to alteration of its determinant factors, preventing it from remaining as it is, the internal imperfection of things, which prevents true satisfaction for

someone whose desires are influenced by craving (Tanhā), and causes suffering for a person subject to clinging (Upādāna).

In Dictionary of Buddhism (Numerical Dhammas), Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto) (2016: 90) demonstrated the state of suffering, so-called Dukkhatā, in reference to the content in Sañayatana-vagga, Sañyutta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 10, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 18 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 e: 318), and Mahāvāra-vagga, Sañyutta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vo. 11, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 19 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 f: 85). The three states of suffering were as follows:

1. Dukkha-dukkhatā: the state of suffering or the physical and mental pain. It meant what was generally understood as suffering by its name and nature.

2. Vipariṇāma-dukkhatā: the suffering resulting from variation or change. For instance, happiness could become unhappiness when the level of happiness reduced to zero.

3. Sañkhāra-dukkhatā: the suffering because of conditioned things (Sañkhāra). The state of compounded things was everything arising from causes and conditions, oppressed or coerced by the rising and decay of involved factors, unable to remain in a stable original state, depleted at all time and leading one holding with clinging to suffering.

In Integrated Textbook for Dhamma Study at Advanced Level, Dukkhatā was characterized into 10 forms (Teachers of Lieng Chiang Printing House, 2009: 26-27):

1. Sabhāva-dukkha or the suffering of all the compounded things. It occurred to all beings without any exception: birth, aging, death.

2. Pakiṇṇaka-dukkha or periodically-occurring suffering: grief, lamentation, physical pain, distress or anguish, frustration or despair.

3. Nibaddha-dukkha or regular or constant suffering: cold, heat, thirsty, defecation, urination.

4. Byādhi-dukkha or suffering of ailment, sickness or illness, based upon certain causes of diseases or dysfunction of human organs.

5. Santāpa-dukkha or suffering of frustration, worriedness, or passion because of defilements: lust, anger and ignorance, sometimes called fire in Buddhism.

6. Vipāka-dukkha or suffering resulting from the consequence of one's misdeeds. For instance, Vippaṭisāra was the present trouble or distress from conviction under the country's legislation, calamity, hardship in the life, afterlife death or entrance to hell after death, etc.

7. Sahagata-dukkha or suffering of endowment. It was referred to suffering resulting from the success in life: gain (Lābha) and loss (Alābha), dignity (Yasa) and obscurity (Ayasa), blame (Nindā) and praise (Pasaṅsā), and happiness (Sukha) and pain (Dukkha).

8. Ahārapariyeteṭṭhi-dukkha or hardship in earning a living. It was the suffering resulting from livelihood.

9. Vivādamulaka-dukkha or suffering stemming from feud, dispute, quarrel and argument. It was characterized as uncomfortability, fear of defeat, apprehension from quarrel, fight, dispute and battle.

10. Dukkhakhandha or suffering from attachment of five aggregates of existence.

## Samudaya: Origin of Suffering

In Tathāgata Sutta I, Dhammacakkappavatana Vagga II, Mahāvāra Vagga, Sañyutta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 11, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 19, the Buddha demonstrated the group of five bhikkhu (Pañcavaggiya) the origin of suffering due to three kinds of craving: Kāma-tanhā (craving for sensual desire), Bhava-tanhā (craving for existence),

and Vibhava-taṇhā (craving for non-existence or craving for self-annihilation) (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 e: 419 – 421). Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto) (2559: 86) described the meaning of Taṇhā in reference to Taṇhā Sutta, Pancaka-chakka Nipata, Anguttara Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 14, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 22 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 i: 456) as follows:

1. Kāma-taṇhā: craving for sensual pleasures, so-called sensual craving for pleasures of five external sensitive fields: visible object, sound, odour, taste and tangible object.
2. Bhava-taṇhā: craving for existence. It was a person's desire, endowed with the view of existence or eternalism, to become what he wanted and to remain eternal.
3. Vibhava-taṇhā: craving for non-existence or craving for self-annihilation. It was a person's desire, based on the view of non-existence or annihilation.

## **Nirodha: Cessation of Suffering**

### **1. Meaning**

People in the world were all desirous of happiness but what they experienced seemed several categories of severe suffering. So, they desired to fade away from the suffering, which in turn looked uneasy to flee away. The term 'release from suffering' became what all people desired, but what they were able to do was often to beg everything to assist him free from suffering. However, after a man proclaimed himself as Buddha or the Enlightened One, he had taught and directed the path leading to emancipation from suffering. He did not inform the people to beg everything outside to help, but he told everyone to follow what he taught by themselves. Inevitably, a certain amount of people following the Buddha's teaching attained the release from suffering, so-called Nirodha in the Noble Truths, which was referred to the cessation of suffering. In addition, the first person in the world understanding the Buddha's teaching was Konḍañña, as considered from the Buddha's word "Aññāsi vata bho Konḍañño," in Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta on the First Sermon, Mahāvagga Part I, Vinaya Pitaka Vol. 4, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 4 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 a: 16), and in the first Tathāgata Sutta, Dhammacakkappavattana Vagga II on the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion, Mahāvāra Vagga, Sañyatta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 11, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 19 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 e: 419)

### **2. Process of Suffering Release**

The liberation from suffering depended upon the process of suffering extinction. Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya) (2017: 195) used the term 'process of suffering extinguishment' by summarizing the meaning from 'Paṭiccasamuppādanirodhavāra,' regarding to the process of suffering extermination, which was contradictory to Paṭiccasamuppādasamudayavāra or the process of suffering origination.

The twelve factors of Dependent Origination, beginning with ignorance and ending with aging-and-death, were in the forward sequence () as follows:

Avijjā (ignorance) → Saṅkhāra (volitional formations) → Viññāṇa (consciousness) → Nāma-rupa (mind and body) → Saḷāyatana (six sense bases) → Phassa (contact) → Vedanā (feeling) → Taṇhā (craving) → Upādāna (clining) → Bhava (becoming) → Jāti (birth) → Jarā-maraṇa (aging-and-death)

In the above forward sequence, Dukkha-samudaya in the Noble Truths was demonstrated in terms of the rising of suffering. In terms of the ending of suffering, Dukkha-nirodha in the Noble Truths was shown in the reverse sequence (Paṭiccasamuppādasamudayavāra) as follows:

Jarā-maraṇa (aging-and-death) ← Jāti (birth) ← Bhava (becoming) ← Upādāna (clining) ← Taṇhā (craving) ← Vedanā (feeling) ← Phassa (contact) ← Saḷāyatana (six sense bases) ← Nāma-rupa (mind and body) ← Viññāṇa (consciousness) ← Saṅkhāra (volitional formations) ← Avijjā (ignorance)

### 3. Characteristics of Suffering Release

The term ‘release from suffering’ had the same meaning of Nibbāna or the extinction of defilement (Kilesa in Pali) and aggregates of suffering. The state or nature of Nibbāna had such synonyms as depletion of craving ( Taṇhakkhaya) , extinction of suffering ( Dukkhakkhaya), allayment of affliction ( Nibbuti) , non-cling or detachment ( Anādāna) , absence of longing ( Anālaya), lack of mental intoxication or canker ( Anāsava) , absence of calamity ( Anītika), freedom of danger ( Abhaya), immortality ( Amata), absence of sickness ( Abyādhi), non-molestation ( Abyāpajja), absence of sorrow ( Asoka), healthiness ( Ārogya), cessation of suffering ( Nirodha) release or emancipation ( Mutti), salvation ( Mokkha), deliverance or freedom ( Vimutti) , tranquility or calmness ( Santi) , unconfinedness ( Asambādha) , freedom from distress ( Nirupatāpa), tranquility or calm ( Paṭipassaddhi) , abandonment of defilement ( Pahāna) , etc. ( Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya), 2017: 445-448)

### 4. Characteristics of Suffering Emancipated One

In general, one free from suffering should be full of happiness. In Buddhadhamm (Extended Edition), Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto) (2017: 343-244) said that the state of a person emancipating from suffering, so-called the state of one attaining Nibbāna, was able to consider from the following admirable words such as Arahanta (one far away from defilement), Khīṇāsava (one without cankers), Asekha (the adept), Prikkhīṇabhabavasanyojana (one destroying the fetters as bondage in the existence), Vusitavanta or Vusitabrahcariya (one lived in the chaste life), Katakaraṇīya (one did what had to be done), Ohitabhāra (one had laid down the burden), Anuppattasadattha (one has attained his own highest good), Sammadaññāvimutta (one emancipated because of right knowledge), Uttamapurisa (the greatest one), Mahāpurisa (the great man), Sampannakusala (one endowed with virtue), Paramakusala (one with great merit), Bhāvitatta (the self-composed one, the well-balanced one). In general, there were also several words having used in other sects or beliefs, but when these words used in Buddhism, their meanings were specially changes. For example, Brāhmaṇa (in general, one in a member of the Brahman caste; in Buddhism, one completed floating evil deeds), Dakkhinēyya (one worthy of the gift), Nahātaka (one having bathed in Buddhism; a brahmin who has finished the studies in Hinduism), Vedagū (one having attained to highest knowledge in Buddhism; a brahmin completed the Vedas in Hinduism), Samaṇa (a monk or a priest in Buddhism; in general, this word meant a wanderer or a recluse. The Buddha was often mentioned and addressed by non-Buddhists as Samaṇa; thus, samaṇas often opposed to Brāhmaṇas.), Kevalī or Kebalī (one who is fully accomplished in Buddhism) Ariya or Ārayajana (the noble one in Buddhism; the noble, distinguished one of high birth in Hinduism, referring to people in the first three Brahman castes).

### 5. Types of Nibbāna

Apart from interpretation of the above meaning of ‘Suffering Release’ as Nibbāna, the levels of suffering emancipation should be considered from the types of Nibbāna as follows:

#### 5.1 Categorization from Nibbāna Elements

Two elements of Nibbāna appeared in Dhātu Sutta, Khuttakapaṭha-Dhammapada-Udāna-Itivuttaka-Suttanipāda, Khuddaka Nikāya, Tipitaka Vol. 17, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 25 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 j: 231 – 232) as follows:

1) **Saupādisesa-nibbāna:** Nibbāna with remaining Upādi (fuel). Nibbāna was endowed with the substratum of life remaining. On the other hand, it meant the extinction of the defilements.

2) **Anupādisesa-nibbāna:** Nibbāna with no remaining fuel. Nibbāna was without any substratum of life remaining. On the other hand, it meant the extinction of the Aggregates.

### 5.2 Categorization from Suffering Release Levels

In Buddhadhamma (Extended Edition), Somdet Phra Buddhagosacariya (P.A. Payutto) (2017: 400) recorded that the nine attainments of meditation comprised (1-4) the four Jhānas, (5) the realm of the infinity of space, (6) the realm of the infinity of consciousness, (7) the realm of nothingness, (8) realm of neither consciousness nor unconsciousness and (9) the cessation of consciousness and sensation, so-called Saññāvedayita-nirodha. On the other hand, Saññāvedayita-nirodha was called Nirodha-samāpatti (attainment of annihilation). All the nine Jhānas were sometimes called the implicit Nibbāna, i.e., (1) Tadaṅga-nibbāna (extinction by substitution of opposites), (2) Diṭṭhadhamma-nibbāna (extinction obtainable here and now), and (3) Sandiṭṭhika-nibbāna (self-evident extinction, immediately apparent, and immanent here and now).

In the Paṭisambhidāmagga, Nirodha, an important synonym for Nibbāna, was divided into five categories (Bhikkhu P.A. Payutto, 2017: 466-467):

1) **Vikkhambhana-nirodha:** the suppression of the five hindrances (Nivaraṇa) in concentration. In fact, all the eight meditative attainments – four fine-material and four immaterial states of mind – counted as Vikkhambhana-nirodha because such unwholesome actions as five hindrances were temporarily controlled when a person abode in all of these states of mind.

2) **Tadaṅga-nirodha:** eradication of defilements by substitution of opposites. It occurred when a person meditating the insight development dispelled the defilements by the substitution of opposite qualities. For example, realizing the truth about oneself and others as mind (Nāma) and body (Rūpa) eradicated the view of fixed identity (Sakkāya-diṭṭhi), observing impermanence (Aniccatā) dispelled the perception of permanence (Nicca-saññā), acknowledging suffering (Dukkha) eradicated the perception of unchanging happiness (Sukha-saññā), and comprehending non-self (Anattā) destroyed the perception of self.

3) **Samuccheda-nirodha:** the cutting off or destruction of defilements at the moment of supermundane paths (Lokuttara-magga). Cut off or destroyed by the path of stream entry (Sotāpatti-magga), once-returning (Sakadāgāmi-magga), non-returning (Anāgāmi-magga), and arahantship (Arahatta-magga), the defilements, especially ten fetters (Sañyojana), ceased irrevocably and never returned like an uprooted tree.

4) **Paṭipassaddhi-nirodha:** the distinguishment of defilements at the moment of supermundane fruition (Lokuttara-phala): the noble fruition of stream entry (Sotāpatti-phala), once-returning (Sakadāgāmi-phala), non-returning (Anāgāmi-phala), and arahantship (Arahatta-phala). This was the state of profound tranquility due to the complete removal of mental impurity by supermundane paths (Lokuttara-magga).

5) **Nissarāṇa-nirodha:** the definite release from defilements or ten fetters. It was the state of deliverance or the cessation of suffering that was equivalent to the state of Nibbāna.

Among five categories of Nirodha, Vikkhambhana-nirodha and Tadaṅga-nirodha were mundane; Samuccheda-nirodha, Paṭipassaddhi-nirodha, and Nissarāṇa-nirodha were supermundane. On the other hand, the first four qualities: Vikkhambhana-nirodha, Tadaṅga-nirodha, Samuccheda-nirodha, and Paṭipassaddhi-nirodha, were indirectly called Nibbāna; the fifth, Nissarāṇa-nirodha, was directly referred to Nibbāna, in its full and true meaning.

## 6. Sañyojana: Indicators of Suffering Release

The term ‘Sañyojana’ was pointed to ten fetters as bondage of all beings in the cycle of transmigration (Samsāra). These ten fetters were divided into two groups, each consisting five fetters:

1. Orambhāgiya-sañyojana: the first five fetters were as follows:
  - Sakkāyaditṭhi: personality-view of individuality.
  - Vicikicchā: doubt or uncertainty.
  - Sīlabbataparāmāsa: adherence to rules and rituals.
  - Kāmarāga: sensual lust.
  - Paṭigha: repulsion or irritation.
2. Uddhambhāgiya-sañyojana: the last five fetters were as follows:
  - Ruparāga: greed for fine-material existence or attachment to realms of form.
  - Aruparāga: greed for immaterial existence or attachment to formless realms.
  - Māna: conceit or pride
  - Uddhucca: restlessness or distraction.
  - Avijjā: ignorance.

## 7. Types of Suffering Emancipated One

### 7.1 Two Noble Individuals: Holy Persons

- 1) Sekha: the learner. The first seven noble persons: a Stream-Enterer, one establishing in the Path of Stream-Entry, a Once-Returner, one establishing in the Path of Once-Returning, a Non-Returner, one establishing in the Path of Non-Returning, and one establishing in the Path of Arahantship.
- 2) Asekha: the adept. The eighth noble person was the Worthy One or an Arahant.

### 7.2 Four Noble Individuals: Holy Persons

1) Satāpanna ( Stream-Enterer) was one entering the path (Magga) and dispelling the first three fetters: Sakkāyaditṭhi (personality-view of individuality), Vicikicchā (doubt or uncertainty), and Sīlabbataparāmāsa (adherence to rules and rituals).

2) Sakadāgāmī (Once-Returner) was one who would return to the world once and destruct the suffering. Like a Stream-Enterer, he destroyed the first three fetters and relieved lust, hatred and ignorance.

3) Anāgāmī (Non-Returner) was one who never returned dispelling two more fetters from the first three fetters: Kāmarāga (sensual lust) and Paṭigha ( repulsion or irritation).

4) Arahanta ( the Worthy One) was one free from mental intoxications or cankers (Āsava) removing all ten fetters.

### 7.3 Eight Noble Individuals: Holy Persons

1) Satāpanna; one who has entered the stream; , one established in the Fruition of Stream-Entry.

2) One who has worked for the realization of the Fruition of Stream-Entry; one established in the Path of Stream-Entry; one established in the Path of Stream-Entry.

3) Sakadāgāmī; one who is a Once-Returner; one established in the Fruition of Once-Returning.

4) One who has worked for the realization of the Fruition of Once-Returning; one established in the Path of Once-Returning.

5) Anāgāmī; one who is a Non-Returner; one established in the Fruition of Non-Returning.

6) One who has worked for the realization of the Fruition of Non-Returning; one established in the Path of Non-Returning.

7) Arahant; one who is an Arahant; one established in the Fruition of Arahantship.

8) One who has worked for the realization of the Fruition of Arahantship; one established in the Path of Arahantship (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto), 2559: 77 – 78).

From the above mentioned, release from suffering in Buddhism was summarized that the state of physical and mental feelings without oppression, suppression, anxiety and distress, including clearness, relaxation, and pleasure.

## **Magga: Path Leading to Cessation of Suffering**

### **1. Eightfold Noble Path**

In Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta on the First Sermon, Mahāvagga Part I, Vinaya Pitaka Vol. 4, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 4 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 a: 16), and in the first Tathāgata Sutta, Dhammacakkappavattana Vagga II on the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion, Mahāvāra Vagga, Samyutta Nikāya, Suttanta Pitaka Vol. 11, Tripitaka (Royal Thai Edition) Vol. 19 (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 e: 419), the Buddha demonstrated the group of five ascetics (Pañcavaggiya) the direct path leading to suffering destruction, called Dukkhanirodhagaminipatipada or Magga in brief. It comprised of eight categories: Sammā-ditṭhi, Sammā-saṅkappa, Sammā-vācā, Sammā-kammanta, Sammā-ājīva, Sammā-vāyāma, Sammā-sati, and Sammā-samādhi.

Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krommaphraya Vajirañāṇavarorasa (1968: 56) explained, “The Eightfold Noble Path comprised 1. Sammā-ditṭhi (Right View or Right Understanding on the Four Noble Truths), 2. Sammā-saṅkappa (Right Thought on renunciation from sensual pleasure, non-illwill, and molestation), 3. Sammā-vācā (Right Speech by abstention from false speech, tale-bearing, harsh speech, and vain talk or gossip), 4. Sammā-kammanta (Right Actions by abstention from killing, taking what was not given, and sexual misconduct), 3. (5) Sammā-ājīva (Right Livelihood by relinquishment of wrong livelihood, and maintenance of upright livelihood. In addition, the Buddhist lay disciples were not allowed to make five kinds of business: trade in arms, trade in human beings, trade in the flesh of animals, trade in intoxicants, and trade in poisons), 6. Sammā-vāyāma (Right Effort on prevention of unarisen evil from arising, abandonment of arisen evil, nourishment of unarisen wholesome qualities to come into being, and preservation of arisen wholesome qualities), 7. Sammā-sati (Right Mindfulness on four foundations of mindfulness (Satipaṭṭhāna): contemplation of the body (Kāyānupassanā), contemplation of feelings (Vedanānupassanā), contemplation of mind (Cittānupassanā), contemplation of mind-objects (Dhammānupassanā), and 8. Sammā-samādhi (Right Concentration by development of four meditative absorptions of mind. In the Eightfold Noble Path, Right View and Right Thought were categorized into training in higher wisdom (Adhipaññā-sikkhā), Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood were listed in training in higher morality (Adhisīla-sikkhā), and Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration were counted in training in higher mentality (Adhicitta-sikkhā).”

### **2. Practice of Eightfold Noble Path**

The Eightfold Noble Path was proclaimed as the only way leading to eradication of suffering and each element of them had different practical procedures upon its context as follows:

1) Sammā-ditṭhi (Right View or Right Understanding) was comprehension in the Four Noble Truths by knowing the suffering, abandoning the craving that caused the suffering, realizing the distinction of suffering and attempting to follow the way to the end of suffering.

2) Sammā-saṅkappa (Right Thought) was a good thought by thinking to abandon, put down and struggle to flee away five sensual pleasures or sensual objects, which were desired, agreeable and pleasant.

3) Sammā-vācā (Right Speech) was abstention from false, malicious, harsh speech and vain talk. (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 h: 166)

4) Sammā-kammanta (Right Action) was avoidance from destruction of life, stealing or violating the rights to private property of others, and sexual misconduct. (Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto, 2016 b: 234-236)

5) Sammā-ājīva (Right Livelihood) was relinquishment of wrong livelihood, and maintenance of upright livelihood.

6) Sammā-vāyāma (Right Effort) was following the Buddhist principle of effort, demonstrated in Padhāna Sutta (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 h: 85-86). It comprised (1) Sanvara- padhāna: an attempt to prevent unarisen unwholesome things to arising, (2) Pahāna-padhāna: an attempt to abandon arisen unwholesome things, (3) Bhāvanā-padhāna: an attempt to nurture unarisen wholesome things to come into being in physical, verbal and mental actions, and (4) Anurakkhanā-padhāna: an attempt to maintain arisen wholesome things not to fade away.

7) Sammā-sati (Right Mindfulness) was thinking over mindfulness based upon Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta (Department of Religious Affairs, 1982 b: 257-277) as follows:

(1) Kāyānupassanā was consideration of four elements of earth, water, fire and air, and five aggregates of corporeality, sensation, perception, volitional activities, and consciousness in the body of all human beings.

(2) Vedanānupassanā was consideration of feelings in feelings by realizing the pleasant, painful and neither-pleasant-nor-painful feelings when they appeared in reality. For example, a pleasant feeling was considered to know that it was pleasant when it appeared, a painful feeling was considered to know that it was painful when it appeared, a neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling was considered to know that it was neither-pleasant-nor-painful when it appeared.

(3) Cittānupassanā was consideration of mind in mind by realizing in reality the mind with or without lust, the mind with or without anger, the mind with or without ignorance, the mind with or without sloth, the mind with or without torpor, the mind with or without illwill, the mind with or without restlessness, the mind with or without anxiety, etc.

(4) Dhammānupassanā was referred to the contemplation of mind-objects. For example, Nivaraṇa (Five hindrances): sensual desire (Kāma-chanda), illwill (Byāpāda), sloth and torpor (Thīna-middha), distraction and remorse, or flurry and worry (Uddhacca-kukkucca), doubt or uncertainty (Vicikicchā), was considered and perceived with mindfulness whether Nivaraṇa existed in mind or not. Five aggregates of existence: corporeality (Rūpa), feeling (Vedanā), perception (Saññā), mental formations (Saṅkhāra), and consciousness (Viññāṇa), were considered in realization. Arising and ending of five aggregates was considered recognizing in mindfulness. Internal sense-fields: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, and external sense-fields: visible object, sound, odour, taste, tangible object and mind-object, were clearly considered and perceived. The fetters based upon internal and external sense-fields. Sañyojana (the ten fetters) was also considered and perceived with mindfulness whether there were ten fetters arisen upon internal and external sense-fields in the mind, how unarisen fetters

would arise, how arisen fetters would be abandoned, and how abandoned fetters would no longer arise. *Bojjhaṅga* (seven factors of enlightenment): mindfulness (*Sati-sambojjhaṅga*), truth-investigation (*Dhammadicaya-sambojjhaṅga*), effort or energy (*Viriya-sambojjhaṅga*), zest (*Pīti-sambojjhaṅga*), tranquility or calmness (*Passaddhi-sambojjhaṅga*), concentration (*Samādhi-sambojjhaṅga*), and equanimity (*Upekkhā-sambojjhaṅga*), was considered and perceived with mindfulness whether there were seven factors of enlightenment in the mind, how unarisen seven factors of enlightenment would arise, how arisen seven factors of enlightenment would be completed. The contemplation of the Four Noble Truths: the suffering (*Dukkha*), the origin of suffering (*Samudaya*), the cessation of suffering (*Nirodha*), and the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*Magga*), was performed by clearly knowing that **Jāti** (birth), **Jarā** (aging), **Maraṇa** (death), **Soka** (grief), **Parideva** (lamentation), **Dukkha** (physical pain), **Domanassa** (distress; anguish), **Upāyāsa** (frustration; despair), **Appiyasampayoga** (association with disagreeable people or things), **Piyavippayoga** (separation from cherished people or things), **Icchitālābha** (not obtaining what one wanted), and **Upādānakkhadhā** (the five aggregates of existence as the foundation for clinging), were all suffering, or, in brief, suffering was the five aggregates as the objects of attachment; by understanding that craving (*Taṇhā*): *Kama-taṇhā*, *Bhava-taṇhā* and *Vibhava-taṇhā*, was *Dukkha-samudaya* (the origin of suffering); by realizing that *Dukkha-nirodha* was the extinction of craving as the only origination of suffering; by following that the Eightfold Noble Path (*Dukkhanirodhagaminipatipada*) was the only way leading to the cessation of suffering.

8) *Samma-samādhi* (Right Concentration) was referred to tranquility meditative development to attain any meditative absorption of mind.

The Eightfold Noble Path was summarized as the way leading the follower to the end of suffering. At the initial stage of *Samma-diṭṭhi*, one's own wisdom was nurtured through his right view that life from birth to death was full of suffering and the true happiness was experienced when the cause of suffering was removed away. At the stage of *Samma-saṅkappa*, one's attempt to flee away from sensual pleasures because of their danger, to give up his illwill and to remove his thought to destroy or molest others. At the stage of physical and verbal development, one's speech was developed by abstention from false, harsh, malicious speech and gossip; his physical behaviour was performed upon three wholesome actions: no killing, no stealing and restraint from adultery; and his occupation to earn a living was based upon what was right, legal and virtuous.

At the stage of mental development, one's mind had to be developed to attain any meditative absorption, so-called *Jhāna* in Buddhism, and one's wisdom had to be developed through the four foundations of mindfulness, so-called *Satipaṭṭhāna*, in order to understand without attachment and profoundly realize the body in the body, the feelings in the feelings, the mind in the mind, and the mental-objects in the mental-objects. At all stages, one should continue practicing with enormous effort to abandon evil, to do good and to purify his mind. On the other hand, an evil behavior was abandoned, a meritorious behavior was conducted; evil speech was abandoned, good speech was conducted; an evil thought was abandoned, a good thought was developed; a wrong view was abandoned, a right view was developed.

## Conclusion

The Four Noble Truths was regarded as the most important principle in Buddhism. It was accepted as the heart of the Buddha's teaching, covering the ultimate philosophy of Buddhism, because it was able to lead the follower to reach the highest goal of human life, the emancipation of suffering. Attainment of the noble truth was described as the destination of

suffering extinguishment, starting from awareness of what was known as suffering, investigation of the cause of suffering to discover procedures of suffering removal, observance of such procedures, the noble path leading to the cessation of suffering, and definite destruction the suffering at the final stage. In addition, the procedures to remove the cause of suffering comprised eight categories, regarded as the holistic way to practice simultaneously. All the eight categories had to be performed together to reach the highest goal. As well, the follower was the only one to understand or enlighten what the end of suffering was, and how the real bliss of self-removal from the cycle of transmigration was.

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