

Right Understanding (View)

(Samma-ditthi)

Understanding the Four Truths

What, now, is Right Understanding? (1) To understand suffering; (2) to understand the origin of suffering; (3) to understand the extinction of suffering; (4). to understand the path that leads to the extinction of suffering. This is called Right Understanding. (*Digha Nikāya, 24*)

Understanding Merit and Demerit

Again, when the noble disciple understands what is karmically wholesome, and the root of wholesome karma, what is karmically unwholesome, and the root of unwholesome karma, then he has Right Understanding.

What, now is 'karmically unwholesome' (*akusala*)?

Bodily Action (*kaya-kamma*)

1. Destruction of living beings is karmically unwholesome.
2. Stealing is karmically unwholesome.
3. Unlawful sexual intercourse is karmically unwholesome

Verbal Action (*vaci-kamma*)

4. Lying is karmically unwholesome.
5. Tale-bearing is karmically unwholesome.
6. Harsh language is karmically unwholesome.
7. Frivolous talk is karmically unwholesome.

Mental Action (*mano-kamma*)

8. Covetousness is karmically unwholesome.
9. Ill-will is karmically unwholesome.
10. Wrong views are karmically unwholesome.

These ten are called 'Evil Courses of Action' (akusala-kamma-patha).

And what are the roots of unwholesome karma? Greed (*lobha*) is a root of unwholesome karma; hatred (*dosa*) is a root of unwholesome karma; delusion (*moha*) is a root of unwholesome karma.

Therefore, I say, these demeritorious actions are of three kinds: either due to greed, or due to hatred, or due to delusion.

As 'karmically unwholesome' (akusala) is considered every volitional act of body, speech, or mind, which is rooted in greed, hatred, or delusion. It is regarded as akusala, i.e. unwholesome or unskillful, as it produces evil and painful results in this or some future existence. The state of will or volition is really that which counts as action (kamma). It may manifest itself as action of the body, or speech; if it does not manifest itself outwardly, it is counted as mental action.

The state of greed (lobha), as also that of hatred (dosa), is always accompanied by ignorance (or delusion; moha), this latter being the primary root of all evil. Greed and hatred, however, cannot co-exist in one and the same moment of consciousness.

What, now, is 'karmically wholesome' (*kusala*)?

Bodily Action (*kaya-kamma*)

1. To abstain from killing is karmically wholesome.
2. To abstain from stealing is karmically wholesome.
3. To abstain from unlawful sexual intercourse is karmically wholesome.

Verbal Action (*vaci-kamma*)

4. To abstain from lying is karmically wholesome.
5. To abstain from tale-bearing is karmically wholesome.
6. To abstain from harsh language is karmically wholesome.
7. To abstain from frivolous talk is karmically wholesome.

Mental Action (*mano-kamma*)

8. Absence of covetousness is karmically wholesome.
9. Absence of ill-will is karmically wholesome.
10. Right understanding is karmically wholesome.

These ten are called 'Good Courses of Action' (kusala-kammapatha).

And what are the roots of wholesome karma? Absence of greed (*a-lobha* = unselfishness) is a root of wholesome karma; absence of hatred (*a-dosa* = kindness) is a root of wholesome karma; absence of delusion (*a-moha* = wisdom) is a root of wholesome karma. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 9)

Understanding the Three Characteristics (*ti-lakkhana*)

Again, when one understands that corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness are transient (subject to suffering, and without a self), also in that case one possesses Right Understanding. (From *Samyutta Nikāya*, (*Samyutta Nikāya*, XXII.51)

Unprofitable Questions

Should anyone say that he does not wish to lead the holy life under the Blessed One, unless the Blessed One first tells him whether the world is eternal or temporal, finite or infinite: whether the life-principle is identical with the body, or something different; whether the Perfect One continues after death, etc.—such a one would die ere the Perfect One could tell him all this.

It is as if a man were pierced by a poisoned arrow and his friends, companions or near relations should send for a surgeon; but that man should say: 'I will not have this arrow pulled out, until I know, who the man is that has wounded me: whether he is a noble man, a priest, a tradesman, or a servant'; or: 'what his name is, and to what family he belongs'; or: 'whether he is tall, or short, or of medium height'. Truly, such a man would die ere he could adequately learn all this. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 63)

Therefore, the man who seeks his own welfare, should pull out this arrow—this arrow of lamentation, pain, and sorrow. (*Sutta-Nipata* 592)

For, whether the theory exists, or whether it does not exist, that the world is eternal, or temporal, or finite or infinite—yet certainly, there exists birth, there exists decay, there exist death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, the extinction of which, attainable even in this present life, I make known unto you. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 63)

Five Fetters (*Samyojana*)

Suppose for instance, that there is an unlearned worldling, void of regard for holy men, ignorant of the teaching of holy men, untrained in the noble doctrine. And his heart is possessed and overcome by self-illusion, by scepticism, by attachment to mere rule and ritual, by sensual lust, and by ill-will; and how to free himself from these things, he does not in reality know. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 64)

Self-Illusion (sakkaya-ditthi) may reveal itself as:

1. 'Eternalism': *bhava- or sassata-ditthi*, lit. 'Eternity-Belief', i.e. the belief that one's Ego, Self or Soul exists independently of the material body, and continues even after the dissolution of the latter.
2. 'Annihilationism': *vibhava- or ucchcda-ditthi*, lit. 'Annihilation-Belief', i.e. the materialistic belief that this present life constitutes the Ego, and hence that it is annihilated at the death of the material body.

Unwise Considerations

Not knowing what is worthy of consideration, and what is unworthy of consideration, he considers the unworthy, and not the worthy.

And unwisely he considers thus: 'Have I been in the past? Or, have I not been in the past? What have I been in the past? How have I been in the past? From what state into what state did I change in the past?

Shall I be in the future? Or, shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? From what state into what state shall I change in the future?'

And the present also fills him with doubt; 'Am I? Or, am I not? What am I? How am I? This being, whence has it come? Whither will it go?'

(*Majjhima Nikāya*, 2)

The Six Views About the Self

And with such unwise considerations, he adopts one or other of the six views, and it becomes his conviction and firm belief: 'I have a Self', or: 'I have no Self', or: 'With the Self I perceive the Self', or: 'With that which is no Self, I perceive the Self'; or: 'With the Self I perceive that which is no Self'. Or, he adopts the following view: 'This my Self, which can think and feel, and which, now here, now there, experiences the fruit of good and evil deeds: this my Self is permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, and will thus eternally remain the same'. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 2)

If there really existed the Self, there would also exist something which belonged to the Self. As, however, in truth and reality neither the Self, nor anything belonging to the Self, can be found, is it not therefore really an utter fools' doctrine to say: 'This is the world, this am I; after death I shall be permanent, persisting, and eternal'? (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 22)

These are called mere views, a thicket of views, a puppetshow of views, a toil of views, a snare of views; and ensnared in the fetter of views the ignorant worldling will not be freed from rebirth, from decay, and from death, from sorrow, pain, grief and despair; he will not be freed, I say, from suffering. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 2)

Wise Considerations

The learned and noble disciple, however, who has regard for holy men, knows the teaching of holy men, is well trained in the noble doctrine; he understands what is worthy of consideration, and what is unworthy. And knowing this, he considers the worthy, and not the unworthy. What suffering is, he wisely considers; what the origin of suffering is, he wisely considers; what the extinction of suffering is, he wisely considers; what the path is that leads to the extinction of suffering, he wisely considers. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 2)

The Sotapanna or 'Stream-Enterer'

And by thus considering, three fetters vanish, namely: *self-illusion*, *scepticism*, and *attachment to mere rule and ritual*. But those disciples, in whom these three fetters have vanished, they all have 'entered the Stream' (*sotapanna*). (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 22)

More than any earthly power,
More than all the joys of heaven,
More than rule o'er all the world,
Is the Entrance to the Stream.
(*Dhammapada*, 178)

The Ten Fetters (*Samyojana*)

There are ten 'Fetters'—*samyojana*—by which beings are bound to the wheel of existence. They are:

1. Self-illusion (*sakkaya-ditthi*)
2. Scepticism (*vicikiccha*)
3. Attachment to mere rule and ritual (*silabbata-paramasa*)
4. Sensual lust (*kamaraga*)
5. Ill-will (*vyapada*)
6. Craving for fine-material existence (*rupa-raga*)
7. Craving for immaterial existence (*arupa-raga*)
8. Conceit (*mana*)
9. Restlessness (*uddhacca*)
10. Ignorance (*avijja*).

The Noble Ones (*Ariya-puggala*)

One who is freed from the first three Fetters is called a 'Stream-Enterer' (in Pali: *Sotapanna*) i.e. one who has entered the stream leading to *Nibbana*. He has unshakable faith in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, and is incapable of breaking the five Moral Precepts. He will be reborn seven times, at the utmost, and not in a state lower than the human world.

One who has overcome the fourth and the fifth Fetters in their grosser form, is called a *Sakadagami*, lit. 'Once-Returner' i.e. he will be reborn only once more in the Sensuous Sphere (*kamaloka*), and thereafter reach Holiness.

An *Anagami*, lit. 'Non-Returner', is wholly freed from the first five Fetters which bind one to rebirth in the Sensuous Sphere; after death, while living in the Fine-Material Sphere (*rupa-loka*), he will reach the goal.

An *Arahat*, i.e. the perfectly 'Holy One', is freed from all the ten Fetters.

Each of the aforementioned four stages of Holiness consists of the 'Path' (*magga*) and the 'Fruition', e.g. 'Path of Stream Entry' (*sotapatti-magga*) and 'Fruition of Stream Entry' (*sotapattiphala*). Accordingly there are eight types, or four pairs, of 'Noble Individuals' (*ariya-puggala*).

The 'Path' consists of the single moment of entering the respective attainment. By 'Fruition' are meant those moments of consciousness which follow immediately thereafter as the result of the 'Path', and which under certain circumstances, may repeat innumerable times during life-time.

Mundane and Supermundane Understanding

Therefore, I say, Right Understanding is of two kinds:

1. The view that alms and offerings are not useless; that there is fruit and result, both of good and bad actions; that there are such things as this life, and the next life; that father and mother, as also spontaneously born beings (in the heavenly worlds), are no mere words; that there are in the world monks and priests, who are spotless and perfect, who can explain this life and the next life, which they themselves have understood: this is called the 'Mundane Right Understanding' (*lokiya-samma-ditthi*), which yields worldly fruits and brings good results.

2. But whatsoever there is of wisdom, of penetration, of right understanding conjoined with the 'Path' (of the *Sotapanna*, *Sakadagami*, *Anagami*, or *Arahat*)—the mind being turned away from the world and conjoined with the path, the holy path being pursued: this is called the 'Supermundane Right Understanding' (*lokuttara-samma-ditthi*), which is not of the world, but is supermundane and conjoined with the path. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 117)

Thus, there are two kinds of the Eightfold Path:

(1) The 'mundane' (lokiya), practised by the 'Worldling' (puthujjana), i.e. by all those who have not yet reached the first stage of Holiness; (2) The 'supermundane' (lokuttara) practised by the 'Noble Ones' (ariya-puggala).

Conjoined with Other Steps

Now, in understanding wrong understanding as wrong and right understanding as right, one practises 'Right Understanding' (1st factor); and in making efforts to overcome wrong understanding, and to arouse right understanding, one practises 'Right Effort' (6th factor); and in overcoming wrong understanding with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in the possession of right understanding one practises 'Right Mindfulness' (7th factor). Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right understanding, namely: Right Understanding, Right Effort, and Right Mindfulness.

Free From All Theories

Now, if any one should put the question, whether I admit any theory at all, he should be answered thus: The Perfect One is free from any theory, for the Perfect One has understood what corporeality is, and how it arises and passes away. He has understood what feeling is, and how it arises and passes away. He has understood what perception is, and how it arises and passes away. He has understood what the mental formations are, and how they arise and pass away. He has understood what consciousness is, and how it arises and passes away. Therefore I say, the Perfect One has won complete deliverance through the extinction, fading-away, disappearance, rejection, and getting rid of all opinions and conjectures, of all inclination to the vain-glory of 'I' and 'mine'. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 72)

The Three Characteristics

Whether Perfect Ones (Buddhas) appear in the world, or whether Perfect Ones do not appear in the world, it still remains a firm condition, an immutable fact and fixed law: that all formations are impermanent (*anicca*), that all formations are subject to suffering (*dukkha*); that everything is without a Self (*anatta*). (*Anguttara-Nikaya*, III. 134)

In Pali: sabbe sankhara anicca, sabbe sankhara dukkha, sabbe dhamma anatta.

The word 'sankhara' (formations) comprises here all things that are conditioned or 'formed' (sankhata-dhamma), i.e. all possible physical and mental constituents of existence. The word 'dhamma', however, has a still wider application and is all-embracing, as it comprises also the so-called Unconditioned ('unformed', asankhata), i.e. Nibbana.

For this reason, it would be wrong to say that all dhammas are impermanent and subject to change, for the Nibbana-dhamma is permanent and free from change. And for the same reason, it is correct to say that not only all the sankharas (=sankhata-dhamma), but that all the dhammas (including the asankhata-dhamma) lack an Ego (anatta).

A corporeal phenomenon, a feeling, a perception, a mental formation, a consciousness, which is permanent and persistent, eternal and not subject to change, such a thing the wise men in this world do not recognize; and I also say that there is no such thing. (*Samyutta-Nikaya*, XXII. 94)

And it is impossible that a being possessed of right understanding should regard anything as the Self. (*Anguttara-Nikaya*, I. 15)

Views and Discussions about the Ego

Now, if someone should say that feeling is his Self, he should be answered thus: 'There are three kinds of feeling: pleasurable, painful, and indifferent feeling. Which of these three feelings do you consider as your Self?' Because, at the moment of experiencing one of these feelings, one does not experience the other two. These three kinds of feeling are impermanent, of dependent origin, are subject to decay and dissolution, to fading-away and extinction. Whosoever, in experiencing one of these feelings, thinks that this is his Self, must after the extinction of that feeling, admit that his Self has become dissolved. And thus he will consider his Self already in this present life as impermanent, mixed up with pleasure and pain, subject to arising and passing away.

If anyone should say that feeling is not his Ego, and that his Self is inaccessible to feeling, he should be asked thus: 'Now, where there is no feeling, is it then possible to say: "This am I?"'

Or, another might say: 'Feeling, indeed, is not my Self, but it also is untrue that my Self is inaccessible to feeling, for it is my Self that feels, my Self that has the faculty of feeling'. Such a one should be answered thus: 'Suppose that feeling should become altogether totally extinguished; now, if after the extinction of feeling, no feeling whatever exists there, is it then possible to say: "This am I?"' (*Dîgha Nikaya*, 15)

To say that the mind, or the mind-objects, or the mind-consciousness, constitute the Self, such an assertion is unfounded. For an arising and a passing away is seen there; and seeing the arising and passing away of these things, one would come to the conclusion that one's Self arises and passes away. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 148)

It would be better for the unlearned worldling to regard his body, built up of the four elements, as his Self, rather than his mind. For it is evident that the body may last for a year, for two years, for three, four, five, or ten years, or even for a hundred years and more; but that which is called thought, or mind, or consciousness, arises continuously, during day and night, as one thing, and passes away as another thing. (*Samyutta-Nikaya*, XII. 62)

Therefore, whatsoever there is of corporeality, of feeling, of perception, of mental formations, of consciousness whether past, present or future, one's own or external, gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near: of this one should understand according to reality and true wisdom: 'This does not belong to me; this am I not; this is not my Self.' (*Samyutta-Nikaya*, XXII. 59)

To show the impersonality and utter emptiness of existence, Visuddhi-Magga XVI quotes the following verse:

*Mere suffering exists, no sufferer is found,
The deed is, but no doer of the deed is there.
Nirvana is, but not the man that enters it.
The path is, but no traveller on it is seen.*

Past, Present and Future

If now, any one should ask: 'Have you been in the past, and is it untrue that you have not been? Will you be in the future, and is it untrue that you will not be? Are you, and is it untrue that you are not?' — you may reply that you have been in the past, and that it is untrue that you have not been; that you will be in the future, and that it is untrue that you will not be; that you are, and that it is untrue that you are not.

In the past only that past existence was real, but unreal the future and present existence. In the future only the future existence will be real, but unreal the past and the present existence. Now only the present existence is real, but unreal, the past and future existence. (*Dīgha Nikaya*, 9)

Verily, he who perceives the 'Dependent Origination' (*paticca-samuppda*), perceives the truth; and he who perceives the truth, perceives the Dependent Origination. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 28)

For just as from the cow comes milk, from milk curd, from curd butter, from butter ghee, from ghee the skim of ghee; and when it is milk, it is not counted as curd, or butter, or ghee, or skim of ghee, but only as milk; and when it is curd, it is only counted as curd: just so was my past existence at that time real, but unreal the future and present existence; and my future existence will be at that time real, but unreal the past and present existence; and my present existence is now real, but unreal the past and future existence. All these are merely popular designations and expressions, mere conventional terms of speaking, mere popular notions. The Perfect One indeed makes use of these, without however clinging to them. (*Dīgha Nikaya*, 8)

Thus, he who does not understand corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness according to reality (i.e. as void of a personality, or Ego) nor understands their arising, their extinction, and the way to their extinction, he is liable to believe, either that the Perfect One continues after death, or that he does not continue after death, and so forth. (*Samyutta Nikāya*, XLIV 4)

The Two Extremes (Annihilation and Eternity Belief) and the Middle Doctrine

Truly, if one holds the view that the vital principle (*jīva*; 'Soul') is identical with this body, in that case a holy life is not possible; and if one holds the view that the vital principle is something quite different from the body, in that case also a holy life is not possible. Both these two extremes the Perfect One has avoided, and he has shown the Middle Doctrine, which says: (*Samyutta Nikāya*, XII. 25)

Dependent Origination (*Paticca-samuppada*)

On Ignorance (*avijja*) depend the 'Karma-formations' (*sankhara*).

On the Karma-formations depends 'Consciousness' (*viññana*; starting with rebirth-consciousness in the womb of the mother).

On Consciousness depends the 'Mental and Physical Existence' (*nama-rupa*).

On the mental and physical existence depend the 'Six Sense-Organs' (*sal-ayatana*).

On the six sense-organs depends 'Sensorial Impression' (*phassa*).
On sensorial impression depends 'Feeling' (*vedana*).
On feeling depends 'Craving' (*tanha*).
On craving depends 'Clinging' (*upadana*).
On clinging depends the 'Process of Becoming' (*bhava*).
On the process of becoming (here: *kamma-bhava*, or karma-process) depends 'Rebirth' (*jati*).
On rebirth depend 'Decay and Death' (*jara-marana*), sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.
Thus arises this whole mass of suffering. This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering. (*Samyutta Nikāya*, XII. 1)

*"No god, no Brahma can be called
The maker of this wheel of life:
Empty phenomena roll on,
Dependent on conditions all."
(Quoted in Visuddhi-Magga XIX).*

A disciple, however, in whom Ignorance (*avijj*) has disappeared and wisdom arisen, such a disciple heaps up neither meritorious, nor demeritorious, nor imperturbable Karmaformations. (*Samyutta Nikāya*, XII. 51)

The term sankhara has been rendered here by 'Karma Formations' because, in the context of the Dependent Origination, it refers to karmically wholesome and unwholesome volition (cetana), or volitional activity, in short, Karma.

The threefold division of it, given in the preceding passage, comprises karmic activity in all spheres of existence, or planes of consciousness. The 'meritorious karma-formations' extend also to the Fine-Material Sphere (rupavacara), while the 'imperturbable karma-formations' (aneñjabhisankhara) refer only to the Immaterial Sphere (arupavacara).

Thus, through the entire fading away and extinction of this 'Ignorance', the 'Karma-formations' are extinguished. Through the extinction of Karma-formations, 'Consciousness' (rebirth) is extinguished. Through the extinction of consciousness, the 'Mental and Physical Existence' is extinguished. Through the extinction of the mental and physical existence, the 'Six Sense-Organs' are extinguished. Through the extinction of the six sense-organs, 'Sensorial Impression' is extinguished. Through the extinction of sensorial impression, 'Feeling' is extinguished. Through the extinction of feeling, 'Craving' is extinguished.

Through the extinction of craving, 'Clinging' is extinguished. Through the extinction of clinging, the 'Process of Becoming' is extinguished.

Through the extinction of the process of becoming, 'Rebirth' is extinguished. Through the extinction of rebirth, 'Decay and Death', sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are extinguished. Thus takes place the extinction of this whole mass of suffering. This is called the noble truth of the extinction of suffering. (*Samyutta Nikāya*, XII. 1)

Rebirth-Producing Karma

Truly, because beings, obstructed by ignorance (*avijj*) and ensnared by craving (*tanh*) seek ever fresh delight, now here, now there, therefore fresh rebirth continually comes to be. (*Majjhima Nikāya*, 43)

And the action (*kamma*) that is done out of greed, hatred and delusion (*lobha, dosa, moha*), that springs from them, has its source and origin in them: this action ripens wherever one is reborn, and wherever this action ripens there one experiences the fruits of this action, be it in this life, or the next life, or in some future life. (*Anguttara-Nikaya*, III. 33)

Cessation of Karma

However, through the fading away of ignorance, through the arising of wisdom, through the extinction of craving, no future rebirth takes place again. (*From Majjhima Nikāya*, 43)

For the actions which are not done out of greed, hatred and delusion, which have not sprung from them, which have not their source and origin in them: such actions, through the absence of greed, hatred and delusion, are abandoned, rooted out, like a palm-tree torn out of the soil, destroyed, and not able to spring up again. (*Anguttara-Nikaya*, III. 33)

In this respect one may rightly say of me: that I teach annihilation, that I propound my doctrine for the purpose of annihilation, and that I herein train my disciples; for certainly I do teach annihilation—the annihilation, namely, of greed, hatred and delusion, as well as of the manifold evil and unwholesome things. (*Anguttara-Nikaya*, VIII. 12)

The Paticca Samuppada, lit, the Dependent Origination, is the doctrine of the conditionality of all physical and mental phenomena, a doctrine which, together with that of Impersonality (anatta), forms the indispensable condition for the real understanding and realization of the Buddha's teaching.

It shows that the various physical and mental life-processes, conventionally called personality, man, animal, etc., are not a mere play of blind chance, but the outcome of causes and conditions.

Above all, the Paticca-Samuppada explains how the arising of rebirth and suffering is dependent upon conditions; and, in its second part, it shows how, through the removal of these conditions, all suffering must disappear. Hence, the Paticca-Samuppada serves to elucidate the second and the third Noble Truths, by explaining them from their very foundations upwards, and giving them a fixed philosophical form.

The following diagram shows at a glance how the twelve links of the formula extend over three consecutive existences, past, present, and future:

Past Existence	1. Ignorance (<i>avijja</i>) 2. Karma-Formations (<i>sankhara</i>)	Karma Process (<i>kamma-bhava</i>) 5 causes: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Present Existence	3. Consciousness (<i>vinnana</i>) 4. Mental and Physical Existence (<i>nama-rupa</i>) 5. Six Sense Organs (<i>sal-ayatana</i>) 6. Sense-Impression (<i>phassa</i>) 7. Feeling (<i>vedana</i>)	Rebirth-Process (<i>upapatti-bhava</i>) 5 results: 3-7
	8. Craving (<i>tanha</i>) 9. Clinging (<i>upadana</i>) 10. Process of Existence (<i>bhava</i>)	Karma Process (<i>kamma-bhava</i>) 5 causes: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Future Existence	11. Rebirth (<i>jati</i>) 12. Decay and Death (<i>jara-marana</i>)	Rebirth-Process (<i>upapatti-bhava</i>) 5 results: 3-7

The links 1-2, together with 8-10, represent the Karma-Process, containing the five karmic causes of rebirth.

The links 3-7, together with 11-12, represent the Rebirth-Process, containing the five Karma-Results.

Accordingly it is said in the Patisambhida-Magga:

*Five causes were there in past,
Five fruits we find in present life.*

*Five causes do we now produce,
Five fruits we reap in future life.
(Quoted in Vis. Magga XVII)*

Source: Nyanatiloka (compiler, translator). *The Word of the Buddha: An Outline of the Teaching of the Buddha in the Words of the Pali Canon*. 14th edition. Kandy, Ceylon: Buddhist Publication Society, 1967. (Pages 30-46) [This format has been produced by Alexander Peck.]

Preface to the Eleventh Edition

The *Word of the Buddha*, published originally in German, was the first strictly systematic exposition of all the main tenets of the Buddha's Teachings presented in the Master's own words as found in the *Sutta-Pitaka* of the Buddhist Pali Canon.

While it may well serve as a first introduction for the beginner, its chief aim is to give the reader who is already more or less acquainted with the fundamental ideas of Buddhism, a clear, concise and authentic summary of its various doctrines, within the framework of the all-embracing 'Four Noble Truths,' i.e. the Truths of Suffering (inherent in all existence), of its Origin, of its Extinction, and of the Way leading to its extinction.

From the book itself it will be seen how the teachings of the Buddha all ultimately converge upon the one final goal: Deliverance from Suffering. It was for this reason that on the title page of the first German edition there was printed the passage from the *Anguttara Nikaya* which says:

Not only the fact of Suffering do I teach,
but also the deliverance from it.

The texts, translated from the original Pali, have been selected from the five great collections of discourses which form the *Sutta-Pitaka*. They have been grouped and explained in such a manner as to form one connected whole. Thus the collection, which was originally compiled for the author's own guidance and orientation in the many voluminous books of the *Sutta-Pitaka*, will prove a reliable guide for the student of Buddhism. It should relieve him from the necessity of working his way through all these manifold Pali scriptures, in order to acquire a comprehensive and clear view of the whole; and it should help him to relate to the main body of the doctrine the many details he will encounter in subsequent studies. (Page VII.)