

Extract from notes provided on Philosophy subject, taught in First year of Engineering degree course to me , in 1962-63 at RIT Jamshedpur (renamed as NIT)- by Dileep Kumar

After enlightenment Buddha became conscious of four noble truths

1. There is suffering
2. There is cause of suffering
3. Suffering can be suppressed
4. There is path leading to cessation of suffering

First noble truth-Suffering

To Buddha life is suffering. Birth is painful, decay is painful, union with unpleasant is painful, separation from pleasant is painful i.e. existence human and subhuman is fraught with misery calls. Fulfillment of desires is followed by pain. In such a chaotic atmosphere millions of millions of people are perpetually being rot

II Noble truth-causes of suffering

Buddha believed that every event has a cause or condition behind it and nothing is unconditional, hence there must be a cause of suffering.

1. The cause of suffering is birth for had a man not been born he would not have been subjected to suffering
2. Cause of birth is will to be born
3. Cause of will to be born is mental clinging to the objects the work
4. Mental clinging is due to thirst to enjoy the objects like beautiful sight, pleasant sound etc
5. Such a thirst is due to the pleasant feelings arising out of previous sense experience
6. Cause of pleasant feelings is sense object contact
7. It is due to the six -sense organs
8. These six sense organs depend upon body mind organism which develop six sense organs
9. These six sense organs develop in mother's womb
10. Whose cause is decadence of consciousness loped in mother's embryo
11. decadence of consciousness in mother's embryo because of the impressions of the past life
12. the impressions of the past life is due to ignorance of about truth

Thus we see ignorance is root cause of suffering. These 12 links cover past, present and future life. The result of present life ignorance would be rebirth and sufferings in future life

III Noble truth-Nirvana

1. Suffering depends on certain conditions which when removed, cessation follows.
2. Cessation of suffering possible in this very life if one passes through stages as prescribed by Buddha in the 4th noble truth. The man who attains liberation is called Arhat-free from passions and sufferings
3. Nirvana is not necessarily as state of inactivity as is generally misunderstood by common men. The . Arhat lead a life of partial meditation but not completely drawn from activity. The very life of Buddha is indicative of this fact
4. Actions are of two kinds - one done under influence of attachment battered and infatuation which is true with with a common man. Another kind of activity which is free from the above is possible for Arhats. The first kind of activity generates Karma causing rebirth, like the ordinary productive reeds .where as the others does not create karma and as such they are like fried seeds barren
5. Nirvana literally means blown out or extivet and thus is wrongly supposed to be extinction of life but blowing out or extinction is of suffering and not of life
6. Buddha's silence about description of the state of Nirvana does not mean his denial of the existence after the attainment of Nirvana. Nirvana are two kinds. Upadinsaes a Nirvana when Arhat is a man. PariNirvana or annihilation of the elements of being possible of the death
7. Double gain of Nirvana: stopping of the rebirth attainment of perfect peace in life
8. The partial fulfillment of the stages of Nirvana also do good to man
9. Nagsena, a pupil of Buddha, describes stages of Nirvana to king mahendra" Nirvana is a profound ocean, lofty like mountain peak, sweet like loney" which can be realized only when attained real nature of the state of Nirvana ,can only be realized and no metaphor can convey any idea about it. It is inexplicable

IV Noble Truth

Buddha , in his fourth noble truth has suggested the path leading to Nirvana (liberation). He calls it eight fold path -a path open to all. The whole ethical idealism of Buddha consists in it

1. **Right Views:** if ignorance about truth is the root cause of suffering its removal is possible only with the right views about the four noble truths
2. **Right resolve:** mere knowledge of truths is incomplete, unless a man resolves to reform his life, in accordance with truths
3. **Right speech:** One must have control over his tongue i.e. a man should abstain from lying, slander, unkind words and loose talks
4. **Right Conduct:** Mere knowledge about truth resolution to reform one's life is meaningless until and unless one
5. **Right Livelihood:** One must earn his living by honest means and should not have temptation to hoard. Buddhists ask s men to free their mind from the ideas old evil and constantly guard against the fresh evils. With such a constant roght effort a man is able to completely ampty his mind free from evil thoughts
6. **Right effort or right endeavor:** In this factor, the practitioners should make a persisting effort to abandon all the wrong and harmful thoughts, words, and deeds. The practitioner should instead be persisting in giving rise to what would be good and useful to themselves and others in their thoughts, words, and deeds, without a thought for the difficulty or weariness involved. And what, monks, is right effort?

(i) There is the case where a monk generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities that have not yet arisen.

(ii) He generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the abandonment of evil, unskillful qualities that have arisen.

(iii) He generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen.

(iv) He generates desire, endeavors, activates persistence, upholds and exerts his intent for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plenitude, development, and culmination of skillful qualities that have arisen:

The above four phases of right effort mean :

1. Prevent the unwholesome that has not yet arisen in oneself.
2. Let go of the unwholesome that has arisen in oneself.

3. Bring up the wholesome that has not yet arisen in oneself.
 4. Maintain the wholesome that has arisen in oneself.
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7. **Right mindfulness:** Buddha says that one must always be conscious of the perishable nature and transitions of the object of the world. Only then he is able to develop apathy towards them. One should always think this not mine or this body or soul is not mine as all these things are perishable. Buddha suggests that to develop indifference towards the body with which man is much attached, one should go to the burning ghat and see how the body disintegrates into flesh, bone, skin, bile etc and ultimately disintegrates into five elements earth, water, fire, air and ether
 8. **Right Concentration:** One who has come out successful of the seven stages, he enters into stage of Samadhi- a state of deep concentration. It has been divided in four stages
 - In this stage of intent meditation a man constantly reasons and investigates into taught by Buddha. In this stage he enjoys and ease out coming out of detachment and pure thought
 - In the second stage a man is free from reasoning and investigation but feeling of pleasure coming out of tranquility persists
 - In third stage a man frees himself even from joy of tranquility but he is not completely free from bodily ease
 - In the last and final stage of Samadhi a man has complete indifference towards pleasant feelings, bodily ease pains and all other kind of sufferings. Then he attains Nirvana or arhatship- a stage of perfect wisdom and perfect righteousness

Thus Buddha's emphasis is on perfect conduct and perfect concentration. The seven steps from right resolve to right mindfulness purges the mind and body of a man from imperfection and prepares him to enter into the final stage of Samadhi where arhatship is complete. The mystery of existence, suffering, birth and death is revealed to him and he sees everything with the eye of a Buddha or enlightened