

Relevance of Eight Fold Path in Buddhism : Modern Context

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Abstract : Religion plays a special role to play in modern world and it is relevant to the 21st century for living purposeful and peaceful life. The teachings of Buddha are taught in four noble truths and the noble eightfold path. Buddhism is about the positive understanding that if there dwell a problem in human life then, at the same time solution to that problem also exist in human life. We have the same power as universe within ourselves. So we can unleash unlimited potential from within and give purpose to our lives. The fact is that those who practice Buddhism understand the causality of life. Whatever the cause we make, the effect is there in life. For making correct causes the eight fold paths has to be internalizing through practicing Buddhism. In today's world the problems and sufferings of individual and society are uncontrollable and unlimited. The world is looking for the solution to all the problems and sufferings and man wants to live peaceful and purposeful life. The present study, emphasis on facing today's world challenges in the light of profound teachings of Eight Fold Path of Buddhism and the solution lies in practicing Buddhism. The four Noble truths and eight fold paths bring the world peace from ideal into bright reality. It offers few very simple and efficacious methods to deal with insecurity, competitiveness, scarcity, tensions, diseases and epidemics in the modern world. The present study, emphasis on facing today's world challenges in the light of profound teachings of Eight Fold Path of Buddhism and the solution lies in practicing Buddhism.

Key words: Buddhism, Four Noble Truths, Eight fold path, removal of sufferings etc.

Religion plays a special role to play in modern world and it is relevant to the 21st century for living purposeful and peaceful life. The teachings of Buddha are taught in four noble truths and the noble eightfold path. Buddhism is about the positive understanding that if there dwell a problem in human life then, at the same time solution to that problem also exist in human life. There is no problem in life that man cannot overcome and transform. We have the same power as universe within ourselves. So we can unleash unlimited potential from within and give purpose to our lives. The fact is that those who practice Buddhism understand the causality of life. Whatever the cause we make, the effect is there in life. For making correct causes the eight fold paths has to be internalized through practicing Buddhism. Buddhism teachings are certain to become happy and win in life. Actually, Buddhism is a struggle to be victorious. It is the victory on our lower self with profundity of teachings of Buddha. Those who uphold the correct teachings will win in the end. In the context of modern world, clouded by trials and tribulations and for sustainable growth, there is essential need of the doctrine that will change the problems into opportunity. The world need the doctrine that gives courage to take step forward, the courage not to give up, the courage not to be defeated by our own weaknesses. Courage is what breaks down every barrier. The present study, emphasis on facing today's world challenges in the light of profound teachings of Eight Fold Path of Buddhism. Thus, four noble truths provide the model for solving the problems in the modern world. In modern world, though there are many amenities for comfort and pleasure available to mankind but people are both physically and mentally not satisfied and do not have feeling of security. Rather with the time, the problems of scarcity of food, energy, poverty, population are increasing. In today's world the problems and sufferings of individual and society are uncontrollable and unlimited. The world is looking for the solution to all the problems and sufferings and man wants to live peaceful and purposeful life. The solution lies in understanding and practicing Buddhism.

The sects of Buddhism are Hinayana and Mahayana and flourished in different lands all around the world. The total output of philosophical works in different languages is so vast

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that a thorough acquaintance with Buddhist Philosophy requires the talents of a versatile linguist as well as the insight of philosophies. The Buddhist philosophy of interdependence as well as Buddha science of mind and human emotions are of great benefit to everyone. The spiritual leader said, "Modern Science has developed a highly sophisticated understanding of the physical world, including subtle working of physical world and brain. Buddhist science on the other hand devoted itself to first person understanding of many aspects of emotional areas that are still new to modern science". The Buddha diagnosed the problem of individual and society just as medical practitioner consults of four noble truths (essence of Buddha's enlightenment) along with solution of sufferings in the noble eight fold path. The Buddha described the eight fold path as a means to enlightenment, like a raft for crossing a sea of sufferings.

The Four Noble Truths of Buddhism are:

1. The first noble truth is about suffering – Birth, old age, sickness and death are inevitable. Suffering within are bound to come to everybody. Human life is fine example of deprivation, agony, sorrow, grief and despair.
2. The second noble truth is about the cause of suffering- desire, the motivating force sustaining the cycle of Birth and Death is the fundamental cause of sorrow. The Buddha explained that the root of all suffering is desire. This comes in three forms, while are described as three roots of evils or poison residing in human life.
 - Greed and hunger
 - Ignorance and delusion
 - Hatred and destruction
3. The third noble truth – cessation of suffering .The Buddha described that it is possible to eliminate suffering is a truth, born out of a deep insight, is the very nature of human life and its contribution.
4. The fourth noble truth- path to the cessation of suffering. The final noble truth is the Buddha's prescription for the end of suffering. The path to eliminate suffering consists of the middle path while come to be known as eightfold path, middle way, the quest for way of life that would give the greatest value to human existence.

Buddhism is concerned with behavior of human beings and it teaches us the way to opt ethical values and conduct to eliminate human sufferings and achieve enlightenment. The eightfold path is part of the fourth noble truths which is the path to relieve the world of suffering. (interrogating one's own actions that accord with the path of humanity)

The eight fold path or path as it's called, is guide for areas to explore and practice (Courie,2013). The eight fold of Buddhism can be divided into three groups. These three groups represent three stages of training: the training in higher moral discipline, the training in higher consciousness and the training in higher wisdom (Bodhi,1994)

- * Wisdom Group (Right understanding and Right intention)
- * Ethical Conduct Group (Right speech, Right action and Right livelihood)
- * Meditation Group (Right effort, Right mindfulness and Right concentration)

1. Right Understanding : Buddhism teaches that one needs to observe and understand what they are seeing and their minds must be clear. Ignoring generates wrong view of the relation between world and self. According to Buddhism, the correct understanding is that men is not created to quest after wealth and enjoy pleasures in one's entire life and that any beginning of glorious moment or fortunes will sooner or later follow with its deplorable and sad ending. All events occurred in everyday life is simply transient and illusive. The world exists in harmony only where the inter-relatedness and reciprocation of everything is recognized and respected. Every individual has its own unique purpose. The spirit of discrimination of making distinctions of self and other, is one that leads to the paths of evil and suffering. This spirit depending on the person and the situation can manifest in such negative form such as contempt, hatred, jealousy, resentment, indignation, arrogance, malice, sullenness, gloom, stubbornness, impatience, disloyalty, ingratitude and so forth. When we have right