

Buddhism

A faith based on the ideology of Lord Goutam Buddha is called a specific religion of its own features and distinctiveness with the universal name Buddhism. On the beginning of the Age Kali: Dark Age the degeneration in individual and social sphere started and it needed something new, specific and dynamic ideology which could impede the unworthy growth of too much ritualism and customary activities in human society to which men are apathetic internally. Buddhism is nothing but a reformatory venture to customary traditional Hinduism and later on it is recognised as a separate, definite and dynamic path to Godhood, hence a religion. The Tripitak, the sacred text told by Lord Buddha is honoured by buddhist followers as their pathfinder.

Basic features of the Buddhism as a religion

- Buddhism is accepted as a religion with non-existent God. Its founder imagined a purely humanistic religion whose only concern was to see human beings free from all sufferings, evolved from worldly attachment and to make it possible one had to practise the eightfold disciplines advocated by Lord Buddha.

In later Buddhism a lot of changes came to the basic principles and Buddha was worshipped as incarnate of God, but not like the Hindu God having the capacity of omnipresence,

omniscience etc. But, the eightfold disciplines remained unchanged up-to-date.

- Early Buddhism had faith in ethics debarred from all sorts of customary activities, but later Buddhism in form of Mahayana believed in ritualism and customary observance as like as Hinduism. The Buddhism was converted by Mahayana order into Hinduism in any form, but it untouched some basic points commanded by Buddha.

- The essence of Buddhism is totally based on following four noble truths (Catvari Arya Satyani) and eightfold discipline (Astangika Marga).

- **The Four noble truths :**

- Dukha-Arya-Satya (The Noble truth concerning the nature of sufferings).

- Dukha-Samudaya-Arya-Satya (The Noble truth causes or originates sufferings).

- Dukha-Nirodha-Arya-Satya (The Noble truth for removal of suffering and realisation of the state of *Nirvana*).

- Dukha-Nirodhagamini-Pratipada-Arya-Satya (The Noble truth regarding the path leads to removal of suffering and the attainment of the state of *Nirvana*).

In simple language the above-said four Noble truths meanñ

- The world is full of sufferings everywhere (Sarvam-dukham).

- The suffering is referred to twelvefold chain of causation (Dvadasa-Nidana).

- The refutation of the causation to suffering is possible (*Nirvana*).

- There is a specific way to refute causation to suffering and that is the eightfold path of discipline (*Astangika Marga*).

- *Astangika Marga* (the eightfold paths of discipline)
 - (a) Right conception.
 - (b) Right thought.
 - (c) Right speech.
 - (d) Right action.
 - (e) Right livelihood.
 - (f) Right efforts.
 - (g) Right mindfulness.
 - (h) Right concentration.

- The doctrine of Momentarism (Sarvam Ksanikam)

Nothing in this world is forever and it prevails only for a moment. The world is nothing but a summation of momentary events. Everything, matter or relation around provokes us to be attached with that as that promises pleasure forever. But actually it does not happen. Nothing is permanent, but momentary and when a thing or relation with which we are attached eagerly goes away or is destroyed because of its short life we feel sadness and it brings suffering for us. That is why, we should not be attached with anything of this world and thus we can be liberated from sufferings.

- *Anatmavada* ñ The doctrine of no-soul.

Buddhism believes in non-existence of soul. It is not permanent also. The soul is nothing but a stream of consciousness.

- *Janmantaravada* ñ The theory of incarnation or rebirth.

According to Buddhism rebirth exists. One has to reap the consequences of his past action done by him in present life or future. Before exhausting the fruits of past actions if death comes, one has to take another birth to suffer the effect. This leads to

rebirth and hence the law of actions.

- **The doctrine of non-attached actions :**

Everytime man does some actions positively and when the doer becomes attached with the actions done by him it leads to attachment to actions. Of all actions only attached action creates binding or attachment but non-attached actions liberate man from all sort of attachments. One should not confuse non-attachment of actions with non-doing of actions, because Buddhism does not believe in non-action, but doing with not being attached with the actions.

- **Attainment of Nirvana**

The final destiny of human beings is to attain *Nirvana* or Salvation. It is nothing but a state of spiritual freedom and perfection which can be attained in the present life and for this physical cessation is not necessary. For this type of attainment the performance of eightfold disciplines is only causal necessity.

- **Middle Path :**

Buddhadeva quits the extreme path always in every sphere in metaphysics, in ethics, in general practice and everywhere. Lord Buddha is famous for His teaching of Majjhima Nikaya- the middle path as for any of his other teachings.

- **Atmadipo-bhava :**

Buddhism, like the existentialism teaches self-help and self-reliance as the most effective means of attaining perfection (Atma-dipo-Bhava). Although it does not advocate the self-centredness of so-called existentialism, but pleads interdependence, mutual help, universal service and fellow-feeling botherhood.

- **Universal salvation :**

Not only personal but also universal salvation is our aim and unless we attain this we cannot achieve success in attaining personal salvation. After attainment of self-salvation one should

have to try his best for others' and this process will go on till the universal salvation attained, for which one has to take re-birth again and again. The stories of Jatak or various lives of Bodhisatva are best examples of this process.

- Buddhism emphasizes in some principles as non-violence (*Ahimsa*), Truth (*Satya*), Kindness to all beings (*Jive daya*), self-restraint, nobleness, chastity etc. Of these, *ahimsa* is the most emphasized one.

- Three refuges or three jewels or three invocations.

In Buddhism fundamentally three refuges taken most emphasized only as three jewels which are only three invocations :

Buddham Saranam Gachami
Dharmam Saranam Gachami
Sangham Saranam Gachami

I take refuge in Lord Buddha.

I take refuge in the Dharma or Law.

I take refuge in the organisation.

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