



**Gautam Buddha's Eight fold Nobel Path in the light of
Swami Vivekananda's Neo-Vedanta Philosophy**

Dr. Jayanta Acharya

Assistant Professor, Hope Institute of Bengal, Email –jayantaacharya16@gmail.com

Abstract:

Swami Vivekananda and Gautam Buddha, two great men who shook the world with their thoughts and actions and lived this land for others over a period of 25 centuries. Lord Buddha, the driver of religion, possessed of supernatural powers, overwhelmed the world with his teachings of compassion and detachment. On the other hand, Swami Vivekananda spread the philosophy of Vedanta, the ancient sacred scripture of India, worldwide and showed the path to human liberation. The lives of these two great men were surprisingly similar in many aspects. Both the wandering monks spent every moment of their lives for a noble purpose. The main reason for Swamiji's Buddhist passion was his deep respect for Buddha. According to Lord Buddha, the main cause of all our physical and mental suffering is ignorance or "Avidya". Due to this ignorance or "Avidya", rebirth occurs, and in this rebirth, we have to suffer the suffering of this world. According to Buddhism, only if the causes of suffering can be removed, the action called suffering will no longer arise. Buddha mentioned the path through which people can acquire knowledge or wisdom and remove ignorance or "Avidya". For this, Gautama Buddha spoke of 8 paths, which are known as the "AshtangikaMarga" or "Eightfold Nobel Path" in Buddhist philosophy. Swami Vivekananda gave special importance to this AshtangikaMarga or "Eightfold Nobel Path" and followed it in his spiritual journey. He promoted this path as an important way to eliminate suffering and realize the truth of life. Buddha Vivekananda's philosophy emphasizes the elimination of suffering and the importance of action. As a solution to this, Swamiji emphasized neo-vedanta philosophy.

Keywords: *AshtangikaMarga, Buddhism, neo-vedanta philosophy.*

Introduction:

Swami Vivekananda "The Eightfold Path" refers to the Eightfold Path as explained or influenced by Swami Vivekananda. It is an important concept in Buddhism, known as the path to the cessation of suffering or the way to liberation from suffering as described by Gautama Buddha. Swami Vivekananda attached special importance to this Eightfold Path and followed it in his own spiritual journey. He promoted this path as an important way to the cessation of suffering and to realize the truth of life.

There are several similarities and differences between Swami Vivekananda and Lord Buddha's Eightfold Path. Both paths seek to eliminate suffering and achieve the ultimate goal of life, but their methods and

emphases are somewhat different. 1) Elimination of suffering: Both emphasize the elimination of suffering in life. Buddha's Eightfold Path and Vivekananda's teachings and philosophy suggest a systematic path to freedom from suffering. 2) Karma: Both believe in karma. According to Buddha's law of karma, good actions bring good results and bad actions bring bad results. Vivekananda also emphasized karma, but he emphasized more on using it for the betterment of humanity.

Promise of the Creator:

Both believed in the promise of God, although their interpretations differ. Buddha did not accept the existence of God, but Vivekananda accepted the existence of God, placing Him at the center of life. Self-inquiry:-Both emphasized self-inquiry to understand the depth and truth of life. Buddha's Eightfold Path and Vivekananda's era and Vedanta philosophy are important themes of self-inquiry.

Sannyas:

Both Buddha and Vivekananda took up sannyas to get rid of the suffering of life. Disagreement Concept of God:-Buddha did not accept the existence of God, but Vivekananda accepted the existence of God and placed Him at the center of life. Method of action:-Buddha emphasized getting rid of suffering through action, while Vivekananda emphasized improving human society through action. Concept of religion:-Buddha's religion is a special path, which is for getting rid of suffering. Vivekananda's religion is a comprehensive philosophy of life, which is for the betterment and liberation of man.

Purpose:

Buddha's purpose was to achieve liberation from personal suffering, while Vivekananda's purpose was to achieve the betterment of all mankind.

In short, the philosophies of Buddha and Vivekananda emphasize the elimination of suffering and the importance of action. However, their concepts of God, the method of action, the concept of religion and the objectives are somewhat different. Swami Vivekananda's AshtangikaMarga, based on Vedanta, has had a profound impact on social life. These paths are Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga, which are important for the mental, spiritual and social development of the individual. Vivekananda's teachings emphasized the elimination of caste discrimination, women's education and universality, which brought about significant changes in Indian society.

Swami Vivekananda was a pure spiritualist, a true patriot and a symbol of nationalism in India. In the religious field, he propagated the Vedanta ideology, known as his Neo-Vedanta. Background: During the colonial rule, the sad picture of the suffering, poverty and despair of Indians made him leave India. On the other hand, Ramakrishna's religious advice, he created this background, called the Neo-Vedanta.

Aim or Objective:

The main aim of his Neo-Vedanta was service to life, that is, service to life through human knowledge through serving the helpless. In his view, rituals are a secondary aspect of religion, the main aspect is service to life. Neo-Vedanta ideology: Apart from Neo-Vedanta, he mentioned that Brahman is not a separate soul, that is, there is no separate existence in this world. Serving the common man is serving Brahmin. He talks about giving special importance to Samadhi for the liberation of the soul.

Path of Liberation: Swamiji showed people a new path through his Neo-Vedanta. In order to fight against poverty, illiteracy, untouchability, oppression of women, child marriage, etc. in India, he asked the countrymen to respect Hindu religion and culture. The direction of his Neo-Vedanta was to devote himself to

the welfare of the world and to serve all living beings. Through this Neo-Vedanta, he wanted to guide Hindu religion on the right path and attract himself to culture and spread that ideal for the welfare of the world. The main center of which was the establishment of Belur Math.

Swami Vivekananda's Neo-Vedanta is a modern form of Vedanta philosophy, which he created by connecting Indian spirituality with Western thought. In this philosophy, he adopted the basic ideas of Advaita Vedanta, while making them relevant to real life and useful for people. The main ideas of Neo-Vedanta are as follows: 1) Self-knowledge: Vivekananda believed that if a person can know his true self or Atman, he can attain liberation. He emphasized meditation, self-enquiry and self-confidence to achieve this.

Vivekananda said of yoga while expressing the practical aspect of Advaita Vedanta (Non-dualism). Vivekananda used the word "yoga" in two meanings, one meaning is to join, and the other meaning is to discipline. He spoke of four yogas in the New Vedanta, - Raja Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, and Jnana Yoga. Through these four yogas, he expressed practical Vedanta among people.

Jnana yoga (The yoga of knowledge): The root of the Jnana Yoga-Bandhini (Bondage) is ignorance. Vivekananda said, due to ignorance, we cannot know the real nature of things. Due to ignorance, we cannot differentiate between good and bad things. This is why the path of knowledge or Jnana Yoga is needed. Because through knowledge, we can differentiate between good and bad things and help us know the real nature of things. And for the self-knower, meditation is necessary. According to Vivekananda, self-sacrifice is an essential part of practicing Jnana Yoga. As a result of self-sacrifice, our desire for self-knowledge or Brahman knowledge arises. As a result of Jnana Yoga, the distinction between the soul and Brahman (The ultimate, absolute and transcendental reality that is the source and essence of all existence) disappears and the oneness of the liberation-seeker is realized.

Bhakti Yoga (The yoga of devotion): According to Vivekananda, devotion or love is a natural thing for humans. Bhakti Yoga is a way of knowing God through love. Narada's "Bhakti Sutra" says, - "Bhakti is the supreme love of God". Bhakti Yoga To achieve the ultimate identity, true, unartificial and constant love or love for God is necessary. Bhakti Yoga is the path of pure love, this love is infinite and great. Swamiji says, God can be realized through love. Vivekananda said, "Bhakti Yoga is the science of the highest development of love. It shows us the way to control love, to direct it in the right direction, to use it for a new purpose and to derive the best result from it - spiritual peace and joy. Do not tag or leave it as Bhakti Yoga, just say - love, love that highest ideal. In whose love the path is like that, all kinds of self-nature will disappear from his mind."

Karma Yoga (The yoga of selfless action): Doing something is Karma. But in Karma Yoga we have to use the word 'Karma' only in the sense of 'work'. Karma Yoga teaches people to work for the sake of work. A Karma Yogi works because it is his nature to work. Humanity has to survive through work. Vivekananda has spoken of working selflessly. Through selfless work one's mind becomes pure and one comes to know his true nature. Vivekananda has said "Our right is the work, not the result" - whatever the result may be. Why should we worry about the result? While helping a person, do not worry about how that person will treat you. If you want to do some great or good work, do not worry about the result". Doing such work purifies the mind and makes one feel identical or one with everything. This is the realization of immortality.

Raja Yoga (The yoga of concentration and mind control): Raja Yoga is the best of yoga. The goal of Raja Yoga is to realize oneness with God. Through this yoga, concentration of mind increases. As a result, it helps in mastering knowledge of any subject. Vivekananda said that this method is not for the weak. Because it requires immense faith in oneself. And this requires mental and physical strength. Faith in oneself and

mental and physical strength gradually enable the yogi to practice complete concentration, as a result of which his oneness with God is realized. This is the realization of immortality.

There is a deep connection between Swamiji's Eightfold Path and Vedanta philosophy. The Eightfold Path is a fundamental teaching of Buddhism that shows the path to a pure state of being. On the other hand, Swami Vivekananda's Vedanta philosophy, especially Advaita Vedanta, emphasizes the concept of Brahman (the ultimate reality) and the oneness of the soul and Brahman. Swamiji has combined these two concepts to create a new philosophy in which the Eightfold Path is used as a path to self-realization achieved through Vedanta philosophy. The Eightfold Path:-The Eightfold Path is an important teaching of Buddhism, which consists of eight elements, right belief, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. By following this path, a person can be freed from suffering and attain Nirvana.

Vedanta Philosophy:

Swami Vivekananda's Vedanta philosophy, especially Advaita Vedanta, emphasizes the oneness of Brahman. This philosophy states that Brahman is the only reality and everything is a manifestation of Brahman. Swamiji's Viewpoint:-Swami Vivekananda created the path of self-realization through Vedanta philosophy and saw the Eightfold Path as an important means to follow that path. According to him, by following the Eightfold Path, man can know his own self and become one with Brahman. Oneness with Brahman: The concept of oneness with Brahman is particularly important in Vedanta philosophy. Swamiji believed that if man follows the Eightfold Path, he can know his own self and become one with Brahman.

Karma and Karmafal: The relationship between karma (action) and Karmafal (reward or punishment) in Vedanta philosophy is discussed. Swamiji believed that through right action, man can improve his own life and move towards oneness with Brahman. Swami Vivekananda's philosophy is mainly based on Indian tradition and Vedanta philosophy. He has created a new philosophy by combining these two streams, where the Eightfold Path and Vedanta philosophy work as complements to each other.

The Eightfold Path is still relevant in the present era. It is indicated as an effective path to remove suffering. By following this path, one can achieve mental peace and depth of life. The eight elements of the Eightfold Path are...

Mental Peace: The Eightfold Path is a way to get rid of sorrow and suffering. Through right attitude, thought and action, one can achieve mental peace.

Moral Life: This path emphasizes morality and good deeds. Speaking rightly, doing rightly and earning a right livelihood are beneficial for the individual and society. Life Improvement:-The Eightfold Path helps in the improvement of the individual and society. Through right effort and concentration, one can achieve the goals of his life.

Knowing oneself: This path emphasizes self-awareness and self-exploration. Through this, an individual can learn about his/her strengths and weaknesses and improve himself/herself. Neutral perspective:-The Eightfold Path helps an individual to live a balanced life, where a balance is maintained between emotions and judgment. Social development:-This path helps to contribute to the development of society. If an individual follows a moral and good path, then society will also improve.

Importance of education:

The Eightfold Path encourages education. Through the right perspective and thinking, an individual can gain knowledge and understand life better. The Eightfold Path is a beneficial path not only for Buddhism, but for

people of all religions. By following this path, an individual can eliminate suffering, achieve mental peace and live a better life.

Right understanding (samyag drsti): 'Right' means honest or true and view means knowledge. Therefore, right view means right knowledge. By gaining right knowledge about the world, false knowledge or ignorance is removed, so we can know the true nature of the world. As a result, the path to Nirvana is paved, by gaining right knowledge, we can give up attachment to worldly things, this attraction, and craving for things disappears from us. With right view, the four noble truths become clear to us.

Right resolve\ thought (samyag sankappa): According to Buddha, to be free from suffering, it is not enough to just gain the right knowledge. For that, one has to form a strong resolve. One has to resolve to abstain from jealousy, hatred, etc. Through the formation of such a strong resolve, the mental preparation of the living entity for attaining Nirvana begins and later on, one tries to use that mental steadfastness according to the eternal state. This is manifested through speech and action. Right speech: After gaining true knowledge, after developing mental firmness and stability, the living entity applies it in the real world and frees himself from the attraction of objects, in such a way that he tries not to hurt other living beings in any way. By using such words, as a result of which other living beings become attached to him, he can remove their ignorance. No such words are used that hurt other living beings in any way. This form of using words is called restraint of speech. 'Not telling lies, not joking, not polluting speech, not slandering, not using harsh language etc. are the principles of speech restraint,

Right Action (samyak karmanta): According to Buddha, it is not possible to attain Nirvana by using sweet words and using sweet words. Although it paves the way to attain Nirvana. But along with this, we have to do such actions that will be helpful to other living beings. They will never be harmful to other living beings. Buddha calls virtue and charity as right action. Refraining from theft, jealousy, lust, enjoyment, false speech and intoxication is the imitation of the five precepts and serving the poor is charity. Through these virtues and charity, one can smooth the path to attain Nirvana by doing right action, i.e. by doing good deeds and good conduct.

Right livelihood: (Samyag Ajiva): Although Buddha told the living beings to renounce practical life in order to attain Nirvana, he never talked about practicing austerity. He said that it is never possible to attain true knowledge through practicing austerity. Again, in practical life, there are more or less enjoyment, desires, wishes, lies, jealousy, etc. which are obstacles in the way of attaining true knowledge. Therefore, according to Buddha, one should follow the middle path between enjoyment and renunciation. One should take whatever is necessary to save life and earn it honestly. One should live an honest life so that one never hurts others. For this, one should refrain from evil deeds such as cheating, stealing, etc. Similarly, one should refrain from killing living beings and eating their meat.

Right Exercise \ Effort (Samyag –vyayama): It is not enough to have knowledge and effort in the above five things, they must be practiced properly and repeatedly. Through both physical and mental exercises and practices, the living entity can always realize right view or knowledge. Again, just as the body remains healthy through the practice or practice of right speech and right living. In the same way, as a result of practicing pure thoughts, jealousy, hatred, and evil thoughts cannot enter the mind. Through long-term practice, the living entity is able to strengthen and ensure the path to Nirvana.

Right Mindfulness\Remembrance (Samyag Smrti): Remembering the true nature of objects is right remembrance. After right practice, we need to remember the nature of objects, if we do not do it, then at some point ignorance can consume our mind. As a result, the path to freedom from suffering can become

blocked again. That is why we need right remembrance along with right practice, then our body and mind can become completely pure and free from suffering without being attached to objects.

8) Right Concentration (Samyak Samadhi) :Right Samadhi is the last of the eightfold path. It is never possible to attain right Samadhi without practicing right meditation and right remembrance. Deep meditation is Samadhi. When Samadhi is completely attained, the living entity can know the ultimate truth and attain Nirvana.

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