Concerning VIPASSANĀ see also ABHIÑÑĀ, ANUPASSANĀ, BHĀVANĀ, MEDITATION, INSIGHT, INTROSPECTION, INTUITION, SATIPAṬṬHĀNA, SUKKHAVIPASSAKA.

**Analayo**

**References**

[1] *A.* II, 94 speaks of *cittaṃ saṇṭapetabbaṃ sannisādetabbaṃ ekodikattabbaṃ samādahātabbaṃ* in order to gain *cetosamatha.*

[2] For a detailed exposition cf. *Vism* 84—435.

[3] *A.* II, 94 speaks of *saṅkhārā daṭṭhabbā sammasitabbā vipassitabbā* in order to gain *adhipaññādhammavipassanā.*

[4] *M.* III, 187: *paccuppannañca yo dhammaṃ tattha vipassati.*

[5] *Dhp.* 373; *Thag.* 398 = *Thag.* 1071.

[6] Cf. e.g. *M.* I, 91; *M.* I, 504; *A.* III, 207 and *A.* IV, 411.

[7] *M.* III, 289; *S.* V, 52 and *A.* II, 247: *samatho ca vipassanā ca, ime dhammā abhiññā bhāvetabbā.*

[8] *Ps.*. I, 21: *ekarasaṭṭhena samathavipassanā abhiñ ñeyyā.*

**SAMBHOGAKĀYA** See TRIKĀYA

**SAMBODHI** See BODHI

**SAMBUDDHA** See BUDDHA

**SAMMĀDIṬṬHI,** 'right view', is the first factor of the noble eightfold path and a quality of fundamental importance in early Buddhism. Just as the dawn is the forerunner of the sun, similarly right view is the forerunner of all wholesome things (*A.* V, 236).

To understand the range of right view requires some understanding of its opposite: wrong view (*micchādiṭṭhi*). Just as right view heads the path leading to deliverance, so wrong view heads the path that leads ever deeper into *dukkha.* Wrong view is one of the ten unwholesome courses of action (*akusala kammapatha*), singled out by the Buddha as those actions with the propensity to lead to an evil rebirth. No other thing is as conducive to a lower rebirth as wrong view (*A.* I, 31), resulting in rebirth in the animal realm or in hell (*A.* I, 60). Just as all growth originating from a bitter seed will be of a bitter nature, the Buddha pointed out, so whatever deeds, words, thoughts, intentions and aspirations originate from wrong view will all conduce to ill and suffering (*A.* I, 32).

To be of wrong view is to have a 'perverted view' (e.g. *A.* III, 114: *viparītadassana*), and such perversion of one's perspective will inevitably influence one's action and behaviour. This same influence causes beings to arise in hell, a predicament due to their being of wrong view and having acted according to such wrong views[1]. It almost seems as if wrong view were a necessary requirement for being reborn in hell. In fact, unless beings were blindfolded by a false perspective, by the fond hope that somehow or other they will be able to get away with evil acts of behaviour, they would quite probably not undertake such evil deeds as will ripen in rebirth in the nether worlds.

The discourses describe various manifestations of wrong view. Some instances of wrong view are related to karmic retribution, instances in which the wrong view consists in presuming that by behaving like a dog or a cow (*M.* I, 387), by being an actor and entertaining people (*S.* IV 307), by performing one's duty in warfare as a mercenary (*S.* IV, 309) or as a cavalry warrior (*S.* IV, 311), one will be reborn in heaven. Such wrong views involve a misconception of karma and its fruit, mistakenly believing that a type of behaviour which has the propensity of leading to rebirth in the animal realm or in hell will meet with a heavenly reward.

Other manifestations of wrong view can be found in the *Apaṇṇaka Sutta,* which examines the wrong views: 'there is no other world', 'there is no action' and 'there is no cause' (*M.* 1, 402-8). Such wrong views not only misconceive, but flatly deny the existence of karmic retribution and causality, and consequently also discount the existence of other realms of existence. Several among the religious teachers living at the time of the Buddha were indeed proposing such wrong views. The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* reports Pūraṇa Kassapa proposing that action has no ethical quality, in the sense that there is no real difference between killing and helping others, between destroying and giving to others (*D.* I, 52). According to the same discourse, Makkhali Gosāla denied causality and Pakudha Kaccāyana taught a theory

according to which cutting off someone's head should not be considered 'killing' , but should be reckoned only as an inserting of a blade in the space between different material principles.

Another such wrong view was the position taken by Ajita Kesakambalī, who proposed that there was no karmic retribution for good and evil deeds, no world beyond, no responsibility towards one's parents, no spontaneously arisen beings and no spiritually realised persons (*D.* I 55). His philosophical position was based on a materialistic conception, which attempted to reduce experience to an interaction of the four elements and took bodily death to imply complete annihilation.

The type of view adopted by Ajita Kesakambalī is not altogether uncommon even in our days, yet it seems to constitute wrong view par excellence. This can be deduced from the fact that the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* not only uses the same formulation for its definition of wrong view, but also defines right view in exactly the opposite terms, proposing that there definitely is karmic retribution for good and evil deeds, there is a world beyond, one has responsibility towards one's parents, there are spontaneously arisen beings and there are those who have gained spiritual realization (*M.* III, 72)

When examining this type of right view described in the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta,* it becomes evident that not all propositions made here are empirically verifiable by the average person. Direct knowledge of the existence of spontaneously arisen beings, for example, would require the development of deeper levels of concentration in order to be verified.

Nevertheless, the main propositions entailed by such right view need not be accepted on mere faith alone. In the *Apaṇṇaka Sutta* the Buddha described a kind of wager argument in favour of propositions that are beyond one's present powers of verification (*M.* I, 402). Even if one does not know whether there is retribution for one's deeds or not, he explained, those who accept such retribution will thereby be led to act in wholesome ways and for this reason meet with respect, friendship and praise in the present world, independent of whether they will indeed reap heavenly reward for their deeds.

In the discourse to the *Kālāmas* has the Buddha made a somewhat similar point, contending that the wholesome results of the basic premises of wholesome ethical conduct are something verifiable within one's personal experience, so that these principles can be accepted without needing to rely entirely on faith, oral tradition or any other type of external authority (*A.* I, 189).

That right view is not a matter of faith in an external authority alone can also be inferred from the two factors the Buddha highlighted as leading to the arising of right view: the voice of another and wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*); just as the arising of wrong view depends on the voice of another and unwise attention (*A.* I, 87). The first factor mentioned in this stipulation does give proper place to the influence exercised by others, a circumstance reflected also in the statement that to establish others in right view is for the welfare and benefit of many, just as to establish others in wrong view is to their detriment and disadvantage (*A.* I, 33). The difference between right view and wrong view is however not only a question of the content of what another may communicate, but involves also the second factor mentioned above, the presence of wise or unwise attention. This second factor seems to be the more important of the two, since another passage proclaims that no other factor is of such importance for the arising and development of right view as wise attention, just as unwise attention stands out as the crucial factor for the arising and development of wrong view (*A.* I, 31).

Wise attention means to give attention 'thoroughly', 'penetratively' or 'down to its origin' (*yoniso*). This goes to show that right view is a matter of thorough examination and not of mere faithful acceptance. The recommendations given above in the *Apaṇṇaka Sutta* and in the discourse to the *Kālāmas* would seem to be practical implementations of this second quality, of the development of wise attention. The same is also reflected in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī,* the first book of the Pāli *Abhidhamma,* which defines right view by listing various manifestations of the quality of wisdom (*Dhs.* 14). All this goes to show that the concept of right view in early Buddhism is not a matter of mere blind acceptance of a set of propositions, but by its very nature requires an intelligent and scrutinizing investigation by the person about to take up such right view.

Along the same lines, the *Cūlavedalla Sutta* places right view among the aggregate of wisdom (*M.* I, 301). This is remarkable, since in this way the sequence of the noble eightfold path has wisdom first, followed by morality and concentration, whereas in other contexts, such as descriptions of the gradual path, one regularly finds the sequence morality, concentration, wisdom. The noble eightfold path's departure from the more usual sequence highlights the function of right view in providing the all important directional input for the practice of the path. Without the guiding principle provided by right view and expressed by right intention, neither the noble eightfold path nor the threefold training will be able to issue in deliverance.

The fundamental role of right view recurs in the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta,* which emphatically proclaims that right view is the forerunner of the noble eightfold path[2]. In regard to each path factor discussed in this discourse, the task of right view is invariably to distinguish between their right and wrong manifestations. In relation to the first path factor itself, the *Mahācattiārīsaka Sutta* then comes out with the statement that to understand right view as right view is right view[3]. Though this statement might at first sound paradoxical, once the function of right view as the guiding principle for the entire path is appreciated, this statement becomes intelligible. Right view as the ability to differentiate between right and wrong manifestations of the path factors, supported by right mindfulness and by the right effort of overcoming what is wrong and implementing what is right, form a necessary triad required for putting the other path factors into action. The fundamental importance of right view for the entire path is also reflected in the *Vibhaṅga,* the second book of the Pāli *Abhidhamma,* which explains that right view constitutes the cause for the other path factors[4].

Just as right view in its function of distinguishing between what leads ahead on the path and what runs counter to it heads each path factor discussed in the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta,* so the recognition of what is wholesome and what is unwholesome heads the exposition of right view found in the *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta.* In order to explain the implications of right view, this discourse first takes up the distinction between the wholesome and the unwholesome, together with their respective roots (*M.* I, 47). The same type of ability recurs in the *Dvedhāvitakka Sutta* (*M.* I, 114) as a division of thoughts into wholesome and unwholesome types. This division of thoughts was undertaken by the Buddha as part of his pre-awakening cultivation of the mind and paved the way for his awakening. These passages indicate that right view as the recognition of what is unwholesome and thereby productive of *dukkha* and what is wholesome and therefore conducive to freedom from *dukkha* constitutes indeed the very foundation of the path.

Right view is however not only the basis for the practice of the path, but proceeds from becoming unshakeably established at the stage of stream-entry until the highest consummation of the path, when it becomes the right view of one beyond training, the right view of an *arahant*[5]. That is, right view remains the forerunner of the path even in the case of an *arahant.* This clearly indicates that right view is of continuing relevance at any stage of the path and that there is no point at which right view is to be left behind.

Though right view continues to be of relevance throughout, this fundamentally important path factor is dynamic, something that evolves concomitant with the development of the path it heads. The progress from right view as the initial guiding principle of the path to right view as the insight gained through the development of the path comes to light in the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta,* which distinguishes right view into two kinds: right view affected by taints and attachment and right view free from these (*M.* III, 72). Right view still affected by taints and attachment refers to the earlier mentioned set of propositions about the nature of reality in terms of its causal functioning and of the existence of certain phenomena in it such as spontaneously arisen beings and spiritually accomplished practitioners. The other type of right view, so the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta,* is the presence of wisdom during realization.

The commentary to the *Mahācattārīsaka Sutta* (*MA.* IV, 135) adds to this twofold distinction by listing altogether five types of right view: the right view of karmic retribution *(kammassa katāsammādiṭṭhi),* the right view of insight *(vipassanāsammādiṭṭhi),* the right view related to path and fruit *(maggasammādiṭṭhi* and *phalasammādiṭṭhi)* and the right view related to the reviewing knowledge following realisation *(paccavekkhaṇāsammādiṭṭhi).* The *Mahācattārisaka*

*Sutta* and its commentary in this way highlight the evolutionary process taking place within the path factor of right view.

Right view in its deeper sense is born of direct vision, gained through stream-entry (*Vism.* 509). At this point, right view proceeds from being an accepted view to becoming an ingrained attitude, based on personal experience and verification. The stream-enterer, who has 'seen' the *Dhamma (diṭṭhadhammo,* e.g. *M.* I, 380) is now endowed with 'view' (*diṭṭhisampanno,* e.g. *M.* III, 64), an expression indicating that by now right view has become firmly established and unshakeable.

The *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta* (*M.* I, 46) describes various ways of gaining such right view, most of which are based on insight into any of the links of dependent arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*). In regard to each of these links, the requirement for the gain of right view is insight into the individual nature of the link in question, its arising, its cessation and the way leading to its cessation. In this way, the *Sammādiṭṭhi Sutta* applies the basic scheme of the four noble truths to each of the links of dependent arising.

The topic of dependent arising as the middle path between the extremes 'all is' and 'all is not' comes up again in the Buddha's explanation of right view to Kaccānagotta (*S.* II, 17). One who gains insight that just *dukkha* arises and passes away, so the Buddha continued his explanation, is endowed with right view.

Other discourses assert that to see the impermanent nature of the five aggregates (*S.* III, 51) or of the six senses and their objects (*S.* IV, 142) constitutes right view. These discourses explain that one who sees rightly (*sammā passati*) will become disenchanted, his or her desires will fade away and in this way liberation can be gained. Similarly the *Mahāsaḷāyatanika Sutta* considers the abandoning of craving and delight in regard to the six sense-spheres and the feelings arising based on them as constituting right view (*M.* III, 289).

Whether it is insight into the dependent arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*) of *dukkha* or into the impermanent and thereby unsatisfactory nature of the five aggregates or the six senses spheres, what right view in these various descriptions amounts to is insight into the four noble troths. Just as the footprints of all animals fit into the footprint of an elephant. So the four noble truths have a paradigmatic role in the teaching of the Buddha (*M.* I, 184). Hence it comes as no surprise when the most frequent formulation of right view found in the discourses equates it with insight into the four noble truths: 'knowledge of *dukkha,* its arising, its cessation and the path leading to its cessation, this is right view' ( e.g. *S.* V, 8).

Right view in terms of the four noble truths parallels a fourfold method of diagnosis and prescription used in ancient Indian medicine, proceeding from recognition of a disease (*dukkha*) and the virus responsible for it (*taṇhā*) to the possibility of complete health (*Nibbāna*) and the practical cure (*magga*) to be undertaken to that end. This underlines the pragmatic orientation of right view and thereby sets it off against mere philosophical speculation. In fact, the four noble truths are not simply four propositions to be accepted, but rather constitute a four-faceted approach to the gaining of truth. Each of these four facets requires a particular activity: the first truth needs to be 'understood', the second to be 'abandoned', the third to be 'realised' and the fourth to be 'developed'[6]. The range of activities described here corroborates that such right view is a matter of practice and realization and not merely the outcome of ratiocination.

Now what does *sammādiṭṭhi* by way of the four noble truths amount to? In practical terms, it amounts to identifying any form of attachment as a cause for the arising of *dukkha.*

This same identification underlies the treatment of views found in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Sutta Nipāta,* a collection containing numerous verses in favour of going beyond views. That is, to leave behind all views in the sense of dogmatic adherence and attachment is none other but the practical implementation of insight into the four noble truths. This, however, does not imply that such insight also needs to be discarded. Far from it, since this same insight as the right view forerunner of the entire path is of continuing priority up to and beyond the stage of full awakening.

That right view continues even when 'views' are left behind can be inferred from a verse in the same *Sutta Nipāta,* which speaks of 'not going into views' yet 'being endowed with vision'[7]. Similarly in the

*Aggivacchagotta Sutta* the Buddha explained that he had put away 'views', having 'seen' the impermanent nature of the five aggregates[8]. The word play in these passages on the various derivatives of *dṛś*, to 'see', clearly indicates that though views (*diṭṭhi*) are left behind, vision (*dassana*) and rightly seeing (*diṭṭha*) still continue, both corresponding to the faculty of insight represented by right view. In sum: right view as the vision gained through deep insight is a vision that 'sees through' any view.

Such penetrative vision underlies a discourse which applies the scheme of the four noble truths to views themselves, as insight into views, their arising, their cessation and the path leading to their cessation, an insight with the potential of leading to freedom from *dukkha* (*A.* IV , 68). Due to this same penetrative vision and insight, the Buddha refused to take up any of the views prevalent at his time (*M.* I, 431). His teaching, he explained, was only concerned with the four noble truths, since unlike other views, the four noble truths do lead to disenchantment, peace, direct knowledge and *Nibbāna*.

For right view to lead to full awakening, so several discourses indicate, it needs to be developed in dependence on seclusion, dispassion and cessation, thereby culminating in letting go[9]. A similar nuance underlies also a stipulation found in the *Kosambiya Sutta,* according to which the development of right view should result in internal tranquillity and stillness (*M.* I, 323). Quite in keeping with this the Buddha, on being once challenged to proclaim his view, answered that his view was such as to lead to the absence of quarrelling with anyone (*M.* I, 108).

These passages show that the early Buddhist conception of right view is not only a question of content but also of attitude. Only right view free from attachment and clinging can unfold its full potential for progress on the path. According to the *abhidhammic* presentation, mental states associated with views (*diṭṭhisampayutta*) are under the influence of greed (*Dhs.*75). This highlights the fact that holding and adhering to a particular view is often a manifestation of affective involvement by way of desire and grasping. Right view, in contrast, being representative of insight into the four noble truths and thereby of insight into the fact that craving is the root cause for the human predicament, points in the opposite direction, in the direction of dispassion and letting go of desire and attachment.

Undertaken in this way, right view becomes the escape from all views, and thus is of great fruit (*mahapphalā*), proper (*sādhu*), wholesome (*kusala*), blameless (*anavajja*), productive of happiness (*sukkhudraya*), and the bright way (*sukkamaggo*), wherefore it is to be followed (*āsevitabbo*), developed (*bhāvetabbo*), made much of (*bahulīkatabbo*) and realized (*sacchikātabbo*) (*A.*V, 238-247). In short: just as the river Ganges inclines towards and leads to the sea, so right view inclines towards and leads to Nibbāna (*S.*IV, 180).

See also AṬṬHAṄGIKA MAGGA, DIṬṬHI, EIGHT-FOLD-PATH.

**Anālayo**

**References**


1. *D.* I, 82: *micchādiṭṭhikā micchādiṭṭhi kammāsamādānā.*
2. *M.* III, 71: *sammādiṭṭhi pubbaṅgamā.*
3. *M.* III, 71: *sammādiṭṭhiṃ sammādiṭṭhīti pajānāti, sā'ssa hoti sammādiṭṭhi.*
4. *Vbh.* 242: *sammādiṭṭhi hetu, satta maggaṅga na hetu.*
5. *A.*V,222: *asekha sammādiṭṭhi.*
6. *S.*V, 436: *pariññeyyaṃ... pahātabbaṃ... sacchikātabbaṃ...bhāvetabbaṃ.*
7. *Sn.* 153: *diṭṭhiñca anupagamma...dassanena sampanno.*
8. *M.* I, 486: *diṭṭhigataṃ apanītaṃ etaṃ Tahāgatassa, diṭṭhaṃ h'etam Tathāgatena: iti rupaṃ...*
9. *S.* IV, 367: *vivekanissitaṃ virāgassitaṃ nirodhanissitaṃ vossaggapariṇāmiṃ..*


**SAMMĀJĪVA** is the fifth constituent limb of the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgikamagga*) enunciated by the Buddha for his disciples to follow to ensure their happiness here and now (*diṭṭhadhammasukha*), welfare in the hereafter (*samparāyahita*) and final emancipation from samsāric existence (*nibbāna - S.*V. 421). Right livelihood applies equally to those who renounce worldly pleasures to practise the dhamma full time (*pabbajita*) as well as to the laity who live house hold lives with wife and children (*gihī kāmabhogino*). Those who renounce worldly

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