
Outline of 8 weeks Course on “What does Abhidhamma mean to us?”

- Textual analysis of Buddha’s teachings
 - An overview of Abhidhamma
 - Definition & Origin of *Theravāda Abhidhamma*
 - Seven Abhidhamma texts
 - Outline of the Compendium
 - Areas of discussion
 - Getting to know our mind and body
 - *Kamma* & its function
 - *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (Law of Causality) & our life cycle
 - *Paṭṭhāna* (causal relations) in daily life
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Textual analysis of Buddha's teachings

- Buddha's teachings can be summed up under two umbrella terms: *dhamma & vinaya*.
 - *vinaya* embodies rules and disciplines laid down for monastics.
 - *dhamma* covers both '*suttanta + abhidhamma*' teachings.
 - The word '*dhamma*' is used to refer to '*Suttanta*'
 - to distinguish from the *Suttanta*, the modifier '*Abhi*' is added to form '*Abhidhamma*'
 - In this way, the Buddha's teachings are classified into three, in terms of collection, basket or text to be learned (*piṭaka*):
 - *Vinaya piṭaka* – the basket of discipline
 - *Suttanta piṭaka* – the basket of discourses
 - *Abhidhamma piṭaka* – the basket of ultimate truth
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Significance of Buddha's teachings (1)

- 3 kinds of teaching (*desanā*)
- *Vinaya* – teaching expounded by means of authority (*āṇā desanā*)
- *Suttanta* - Discourses expounded using common expressions or conventional terms (*vohāra desanā*)
- *Abhidhamma* – teaching expounded by use of ultimate terms (*paramattha desanā*)
- 3 kinds of teaching or dispensation (*sāsana*)
- *Vinaya* – admonition given in accordance with one's transgression (*yathāparādha sāsana*)
- *Suttanta* – teaching expounded to suit the temperaments of the listeners (*yathānuloma sāsana*)
- *Abhidhamma*– teaching based on the true nature (*yathādhamma sāsana*)

Significance of Buddha's teachings (2)

- 3 kinds of talk (*kathā*)
 - *Vinaya* – talk to restrain minor and major offences or transgression (*saṃvarāsaṃvara kathā*)
 - *Suttanta* – talk to dispel wrong views (*diṭṭhi viniveṭhana kathā*)
 - *Abhidhamma* – talk discerning & and matter (*nāmarūpa pariccheda kathā*)
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- 3 kinds of practice or training (*sikkhā*) & 3 ways of removal (*pahāna*)
 - *Vinaya* – training in higher morality (*adhisīla sikkhā*) removes mental defilements (*kilesā*) at the transgression level (*vītikkama pahāna*)
 - *Suttanta* – training in higher concentration (*adhicitta sikkhā*) removes mental defilements at the surface level (*pariyuṭṭhāna pahāna*)
 - *Abhidhamma* – training in higher wisdom (*adhipaññā sikkhā*) removes mental defilements at the latent level (*anusaya pahāna*)

Relation between The First sermon (*dhammacakkapavattana sutta*) & Abhidhamma

- The composed factors of the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering (*magga sacca*) pertain to the *Abhidhamma*.
- 1) *sammā diṭṭhi* – right view/ understanding - *amoha (paññā) cetasika*
- 2) *sammā saṅkappa* – right thought – *vitakka cetasika*
- 3) *sammā vācā* – right speech - *sammā vācā cetasika*
- 4) *sammā kammanta* – right action - *sammā kammanta cetasika*
- 5) *sammā ājīva* – right livelihood - *sammā ājīva cetasika*
- 6) *sammā vāyāma* – right effort - *vīriya cetasika*
- 7) *sammā sati* – right mindfulness - *sati cetasika*
- 8) *sammā samādhi* – right concentration - *ekaggatā cetasika*

An overview of Abhidhamma

- What is 'Abhidhamma'?

- *Abhi + dhamma*
- The prefix '*Abhi*' represents
 - 1. higher, excelling (*atireka*)
 - 2. distinguished (*visesa*)
 - in the method of treatment, method of presentation
 - (literally) higher teaching in which the *dhamma* is expounded in more details and in an analytical way than *Suttanta*
 - 3 dimensions: philosophy, psychology, ethics (bodhi)
 - psycho ethical philosophy (Thitthila)
 - something of philosophy, much of psychology & also of ethics (Sīlānanda)

The Seven Abhidhamma texts

- 1) *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* – The Explanation of dhamma
 - 2) *Vibhaṅga* – The Book of Analysis
 - 3) *Dhātukathā* – The Talk on elements
 - 4) *Puggalapaññatti* – The Designation of Individuals
 - 5) *Kathāvatthu* – The Points of Controversy
 - 6) *Yamaka* – The Book of Pairs
 - 7) *Paṭṭhāna* – The Book of Conditions
 - Seven Abhidhamma texts in (12) volumes, in about 5000 pages in the Sixth Buddhist Council version
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The Manual of Abhidhamma

- *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* – The Manual of Abhidhamma
 - known as *Thingyo* (*saṅgaha*) in Myanmar
- considers to be the summary of Seven Abhidhamma texts
- Primer of Abhidhamma studies in Myanmar
- Author: compiled in Sri Lanka by Ven. Anuruddha of India
- Translated works:
 - Manual of the Abhidhamma (Nārada Mahāthera)
 - A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma (Bhikkhu Bodhi)

Outlines of chapter 1 & 2 of the Compendium

- Chapter one: CONSCIOUSNESS (*citta*)
 - elucidates the nature of two main concepts:
 - ultimate realities (*paramattha*) and concept (*paññatti*)
 - Two types of truth:
 - ultimate truth (*paramattha sacca*) and conventional truth (*sammuti sacca*)
 - deals exhaustively with types and states of mind which can occur in beings
 - on the basis of three ethical qualities
- Chapter two: MENTAL STATES (*cetasika*)
 - enumerates the states with their attributes or qualities
 - shows in what manner they group and operate together

Outlines of chapter 3 of the Compendium

- Chapter three: MISCELLANEOUS (or) SPECIAL ITEMS (*pakiṇṇaka*)
 - describes classification of consciousness in terms of
 - feeling, root, function, door, object and base
 - details the ancillary conditions necessary to the
 - arising and presence of those integral states of mind
 - together with certain aspects of their presence
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Outlines of chapter 4 & 5 of the Compendium

- Chapter four: PROCESS (*vīthi*): Active and Passive mental processes
 - Having in the previous sections dealt with a static analysis of the various states,
 - this chapter shows their kinetic behaviour, that is, their mode of coming to be, progress and passing away.
 - Chapter five: PROCESS FREE (*vīthimutta*): *Kamma* & Rebirth in 31 planes
 - closes the section concerned purely with mental phenomena
 - by dealing with matters directly associated with them, such as planes of existence, rebirth, action (*kamma*), and death.
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Outlines of chapter 6 & 7 of the Compendium

- Chapter six: MATERIAL QUALITIES (*rūpa*)
 - specifies primary and dependent qualities of matter
 - their conditions, formations, grouping and occurrence
 - closes with a short section on the unconditioned element (*nibbāna*)
- Chapter seven: COMPOSITE GROUPS (*samuccaya*)
 - details the collection of Abhidhamma and Suttanta terms,
 - serves as the index of Buddhist technical terms and its categories in the Abhidhamma and Suttanta
 - which from their particular qualities have direct bearing on the mental and material qualities already enumerated.

Outlines of chapter 8 of the Compendium (1)

- Chapter 8: LAW OF CAUSALITY (*paccaya*) is threefold in content.
 - *Paṭiccasamuppāda* (Law of Dependent Origination/ Arising)
 - explicates (12) constituent cyclic series
 - operating continuously until its continuity is broken by non-arising of Craving (*taṇhā*)
 - each factor result from a cause
 - itself becomes the cause for the arising of subsequent result

Outlines of chapter 8 of the Compendium (2)

- Chapter 8: LAW OF CAUSALITY (*paccaya*)
- *Paṭṭhāṇa*: Causal relations
 - elucidates the twenty-four conditions,
 - essential to the existence of, and uninterrupted connections between, the individual states operating within such a causal series.
 - *Paññatti*, the nature of concept

Outlines of chapter 9 of the Compendium

- Chapter 9: FUNDAMENTALS OF PRACTICE of MENTAL DEVELOPMENT (*kammaṭṭhāna*)
 - deals with the two basic types of mental development (*bhāvanā*)
 - tranquility (*samatha*) & insight (*vipassanā*)
 - concisely surveys all the methods of meditation exhaustively
 - the objects associated with its practice & temperaments of beings
 - All theoretical analysis of mind and matter finally converges upon the practice of meditation, culminating in the attainment of final liberation of the mind by non-clinging

structure & method of the Compendium

- subject arrangement is strictly progressive, leading the student gently from the simple to the increasingly more complicated, but in such a manner that he is always prepared for what is to come next.
- Teaching not directed towards producing a rapid superficial result, in which knowledge is random and is disconnected,
- but to the developing of a proper basis upon which comprehension of the subject may grow satisfactorily.
- It is slow and thorough, with every single sentence containing material of importance to the growth of such comprehension.

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