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PAPER : BUDHHA DHAMMA TEXT

**TOPIC : BUDHHA ETHICAL TEACHING OF DHAMMA :
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" The best of paths is the Eightfold Path. The best of Truths are the four Sayings. Non-attachment is the best of states. The best of bipeds is the seeing One.

– Dhammapada

The Buddha utilized only one term, Dhamma, to refer fact and values in society, singular and plural forms of the term dhamma, namely, dhammo and dhamma, are used in the sense of fact as well as value. I will discuss the Buddha's dhamma i.e Tisikkha Sila

Tisikkhā Sīla

Buddhism emphasizes on the need of self-culture or moral rectitude to gain freedom from the world of hazards. The early Buddhism states that a beginner is not in a position to reach the final stage all at once but only by a gradual process. This gradual process comprises three steps:

- I. Gradual process of training -*Anupubbasikkhā*
- II. Gradual working-out -*Anupubbakiriya*
- III. Gradual practice -*Anupubbapaṭipadā*.

Buddhism emphasizes this gradual process as it is recognized that even an immoral person may reach the state of moral perfection. In Buddhism human beings, in different stages of moral and spiritual development, are generally compared with a lotus growing gradually in muddy water of a pond but rises over and above the muddy water.

In general Buddhism prescribes a threefold gradual teaching for disciples:

1. Training in higher morality (*Adhisīla Sikkhā*)
2. Training in higher mentality (*Adhicitta Sikkhā*)
3. Training in higher wisdom (*Adhipañña Sikkhā*).

It can be said that all the teachings of the Buddha are included in the threefold trainings. Once a monk said the Buddha, "I am unable to train myself in the more than a hundred and fifty training rules that come up for recitation every fortnight." Then the Buddha explained the nature of three trainings and asked the monk thus, "Are you able to train in these trainings: higher morality, higher mentality and higher wisdom? When you train you will abandon lust, hatred and delusion. With their abandoning you will not do anything unwholesome or resort to anything evil. The threefold trainings are not mere theoretical in nature but it need to be practiced in daily life. This training makes a bridge between theoretic and practical aspects of life.

Adhisīla Sikkhā

Virtuous or moral behavior consists of two parts; positive and negative. The negative part of this teaching prescribes some measures to avoid evil and the positive part advocates for cultivation of good. These two parts are the components of each other. For example, restraints from killing is the negative part of a particular *Adhisīla Sikkhā* and in the other hand the positive part of this *Sikkhā* is given as showing compassion for all beings.

Buddhism prescribes different kinds of *Sīla*. *Visuddhimagga* states about four kinds of *Sīla*: *Cetaā Sīla*, *Cetasika Sīla*, *Samvara Sīla*, and *Avitikkhama Sīla*. *Brahmajāla Sutta* gives a detailed analysis of moral virtues. It categorizes all the moral virtues in three heads: the shorter section, the middle length section and the longer section. The moral virtues discussed there are too numerous to be mentioned here. They pertain to a wide

Though these moral virtues are grouped in various categories, the most elementary are those comprising the group of five virtues, popularly known as *Pañca Sīla*. The five precepts may be considered at two levels: first, it enables men to live together in civilized communities with mutual trust and respect; second, it is the starting point for the spiritual journey towards liberation. In particular cases or in particular occasions these five virtues are extended to eight and even ten in number. The first five virtues or precepts, the *pañca sīla*, are stated as follows:

1. *Pāṇātipātā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from the taking of life.
2. *Adinnādānā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept not to take what is not given.
3. *Kāmesumicchācārā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from misconduct in sensual actions.
4. *Musāvādā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from false speech.
5. *Surāmedaya majjhapaṃsādaṃ verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from liquor that causes intoxication and indolence.

There is nothing special about these precepts; they are simply the basic requirements for leading a good life and building a good community. Respect for life and property, truthfulness, leading a lifestyle which avoids excessive, illegitimate and harmful pleasures and awareness of the danger of social evils like alcoholism and drugs addiction are the basic moral concerns of the Buddhist society.

The Eight Precepts

Pious Buddhists usually observe eight moral precepts instead of *pañña sīla* on the *Uposatha* days to acquire greater merit. In addition to *pañña sīla* more there precepts are prescribed for the days of *Uposatha*. *Uposatha* means “living with good conduct.” These three additional precepts are:

Vi) *vikālabhojanā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from taking untimely meals.

Vii) *Naccha gīta vādita visukadassanā mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa maṇḍana vibhūsanatthānā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from dancing, singing, music watching, grotesque mime, from using garlands, perfumes, cosmetics and personal adornments.

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Viii) *Uccāsayana mahāsayanā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from the use of high seats.

These three additional *sīlas* are, sometimes, known as ‘*uposatha sīla*’. The lay disciples of Buddhism are advised to practice these virtues only during the period of *uposatha* while monks and nuns are advised to take the precept for life long. Hence, for lay people eight precepts is a periodical virtue while for people who lead a life of renunciation the *attha sīla* is a virtue to be practiced lifelong. A layman during the practice of *attha sīla* must not live with his or her family since the observation constitutes a temporary form of renunciation. The purpose of these abstinences is to control one’s lust, pride, craving for and attachment to sensuous objects.

The Ten Precepts (Dasa Sīla)

The ten precepts are laid for *Sāmaṇera* and for the more pious people of the laity. They may observe it for a certain period or for lifetime. In *Dasa sīla* the seventh *sīla* for the *uposatha sīla* is divided into two parts:

- Vii) *Naccha gīta vādita visukadassanā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from dancing, music, singing and watching grotesque mime.
- Viii) *mālāgandha vilepan dhāraṇa maṇḍana vibhūsanatthānā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from use of garlands, perfumes and personal adornments.
- ix) *Uccāsayana mahāsayanā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from the use of high seats.

- X) *Jāta rupa rajata patiggahanā verāmaṇi sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi* –I undertake the precept to abstain from accepting gold and silver.

Adhicitta Sikkhā

In broad sense, *Samādhi* is a practice to train one's mind. In *Samādhi*, a practitioner learns how to guard the doors of sense. Thus, *Samādhi* includes mindfulness and awareness, containment with simplicity and destruction of five hindrances to mental development and vision. Buddhism thinks that mind is the best friend and worst of the enemies of a person. The mind may make a person to reach on the peak of wisdom or it may destroy every aspect of his personality. Hence, a person should always be effortful to control his or her mind. Rather he or she must always be watchful and alert of his or her mental and physical activities.

Meditation or *Samādhi* brings this awareness and alert. In this sense meditation is named after 'journey of awareness'. The seventh and eighth stage of the Noble-Eight-Path is treated as the '*samādhi* or *addhisīla sikkhā* which comprises two steps of 'right mindfulness' and right concentration. The seventh stage of noble eight paths is called as 'right mindfulness. This implies the state of constant awareness with regard to body, feeling, mind and idea. The four fundamentals of mindfulness bring following seven factors of enlightenment to full perfection:

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- I) Mindfulness (*sati*)
 - II) Investigation of the law (*Dhamma vicaya*)
 - III) Energy (*vīriya*)
 - IV) Rapture (*pīti*)
 - V) Tranquility (*passadhi*)
 - VI) Concentration (*Samādhi*)
 - VII) Equanimity (*upekkhā*)

Development of this type of mindfulness is necessary for a person to prevent being led to astray by erroneous views. It is a culmination of intellectual process which links-up a person with intuitive process.

The right mindfulness results into right concentration, the final stage of the noble eight fold path. At this stage, the practitioner aims at one-pointedness of mind. He concentrates on the real nature of the world and worldly things, i.e., suffering (*dukkha*), non-permanence (*anicca*) and non-soul (*anatta*).

This one-pointedness sets a practitioner into meditation. Buddhism describes, mainly, two types of *Samādhi*:

- a) *Samatha kammaṭṭhāna bhāvanā*
- b) *Vipassanā kammaṭṭhāna bhāvanā*.

There are forty types of *samatha bhāvanā*. Indeed it is a technique of attaining calmness or coolness in the mind. By adoption this practice one can experience deep absorption and may achieve some attainments and full satisfaction. Through arduous application of the thought, only on one particular object, ignoring all the distractions of the moment to movement of feelings, body, sensation of mind, one is to control over the mind.

every moment the mind is required to observe it's coming and outgoing movement with full alert. The meditator should have full vigil on the six doors of senses. The object of this meditation is instant change of the body, the sensation, the feeling and the thought of the mind. In this type of meditation there is no recitation of any *mantara*. One can do it at any time and any place.

Adhipaññā Sikkhā

Paññā is an enlighten word-view based on the insight into impermanence, non-self and dependent origin of all phenomena, that is, that all changes are subject to cause and conditions. The Buddhist ethics is rooted in knowledge and effort, not in determinism or accidentalism. The *Paññā* or the *Adhipaññā Sikkhā* serves the key stone to that factor of Buddhist ethics.

After the stage of *Samādhi*, which is a jhanic stage, one arrives on *paññā* with the realization the material and mundane quality of things including one's own body mind. Then the meditator concentrates on the producing a mind made body on acquiring physical powers, such as passing through rocks, walking on water, on attending the supernatural hearing, the knowledge other people's thought, knowledge of his own previous birth as well as knowledge of that of others. Now the meditator acquires purity of celestial eye, for this point he proceeds to the realization of the destruction *āsava* and so to the realization of four noble truths.

Buddhism places *sīla* or proper conduct before meditation because concentration is not possible without proper mental peace and without proper social environment. In fact a person can get proper social environment only when he moves properly in society. In other words, proper social conduct of its member is the factor which can make a society peaceful, honest and justified. In the same manner a person can attain the personal perfection only when there is a proper social environment.

Buddhism gives frequent warnings about the extreme danger of attempting for the state of mental concentration without thorough grounding in the practice of *sīla*. At the same time if the moralities are to be kept to increasing degree, then *samādhi* and *paññā* would arise automatically. Hence, *sīla* is the predecessor of *samādhi* and *paññā* in the sense that without proper morality one cannot attain the virtue which is essential for *samādhi* and without *samādhi* one cannot attain *paññā* as without moral discipline one cannot get wisdom.