

## TEACHINGS OF DHAMMA

**Rajni Bala<sup>1</sup>, Ph. D. & Alisha Gill<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, Ramgarhia College of Education, Phagwara, Punjab

E-mail Id: [rb\\_rce@yahoo.com](mailto:rb_rce@yahoo.com)

<sup>2</sup>Researcher, Chitkara University, Rajpura, Punjab, E-mailId: [gill.alisha86@gmail.com](mailto:gill.alisha86@gmail.com)

### Abstract

*Buddha wanted to make people aware and developed. For this purpose he gave his teachings. Therefore the canon was written in Pali language. There are three Pitikas of Buddha's teachings: Vinayapitika, Suttapitika and Abhidhamma Pitika. Gautama Buddha gave Dhamma as a philosophy of life. Buddha's Dhamma is based on happiness and peace of mind rather than political and social environment. Four noble truths are the basic principles of Dhammai. eDukkha, Samudaya, Nirvana and Magga. Eightfold Path is also the main root of Dhamma which includes Samma Ditti, Samma Sankappa, Samma Vaca, Sama Kammanta, Samma Ajiva, Samma Vayama, Samma Sati and Samma Samadhi. In Indian history, Buddha was the first person who thought about the mankind, abolishment of slavery, higher morality and idea of brotherhood. At the time of Buddha, India was suffering from rigid Varna System. Buddha provided equal opportunities to both men and women without any discrimination. Women hold important place in Buddhism. Because of equal opportunities provided by Buddha in Sangha many women played important role in the society and became Bikshunis. The teachings of Dhamma are based on scientific attitude, logical thinking, rationality, practicability, tolerance, universality, equality, brotherhood. Buddha Dhamma is an empire which is built on love and reason.*



*Scholarly Research Journal's* is licensed Based on a work at [www.srjis.com](http://www.srjis.com)

## Introduction

Buddhism is not a religion; it is a 'Dhamma' which means 'a way of life'. Buddha gave his Dhamma to all the people without any discrimination. Dhamma is based on equality and humanity. Buddha was born in 6<sup>th</sup> century. He left his home for the attainment of enlightenment. At the age of 35 he attained the ultimate enlightenment. After that he gave his teachings to all the people. He wanted to make people aware and developed. For this purpose he gave his teachings. When Buddha started to give his teachings, his entire teachings rested merely on verbal tradition. Gautama left nothing in writings. All his teachings were spread through mouth. In Ancient India, the memory played the important role than in the modern book-blessed days. His teachings were much more keenly valued than at present. But after some centuries, there was need to collect the Buddha's teachings. Therefore the canon was written in Pali language. It is known as 'Tripitaka' that is 'three baskets'.

1. The first part is called the Vinayapitika, it deals with the precepts and organization of the monastic life, and comprises three books: Suttavibhanga, Khandhakas, Parivara.
2. The second part is called the Suttapitika. The Buddha's doctrine of salvation is set forth in this, mostly in the forms of dialogues, or discourses of the master to his disciples, frequently embodied in a historical setting. This part comprises the: Didhanikaya, Majjihimanikaya, Anguttaranikaya, Samyuttanikaya, Khuddakanikaya.
3. The third part of Tripitika is called Abhidhamma Pitika. This part is of a psychological nature, discussing the psychological prolegomena of the Buddhist ethical system. It comprises seven books: Dhammasangani, Vibhanga, Kathavatthu, Puggalapannatti, Dhatukatha, Yamaka and Pathana.

If we will read these scriptures then we will be definitely surprised by the ideas of Buddha. Gautama Buddha gave Dhamma as a philosophy of life. Buddha's Dhamma is based on happiness and peace of mind rather than political and social environment. Today world is suffering from environmental pollution but mental pollution is more dangerous than the environmental pollution. Therefore, there is need to protect ourselves from the mental pollution first. Dhamma teaches the value of human being, relationships between the human beings and relationship of humans with the other creatures of the universe. Dhamma teaches us to attain truth, wisdom, beauty, love, happiness, self-discipline, initiative, tolerance and compassion. Dhamma teaches us the following basic fundamentals of Buddhism:

**Four noble truths:** Four noble truths are the basic principles of Dhamma. Buddhism taught us these principles to understand the purpose of life.

1. Dukkha (the truth of suffering): According to Buddha, life is not ideal as we per of our expectations. Human beings are full of desires. When we are able to satisfy our desires, we are satisfied. And when we are not able to satisfy our desires, we feel unsatisfied and unfulfilled. This is the ultimate truth of suffering.
2. Samudaya (the truth of the origin of suffering): According to Buddha, our immediate worries are concerned with suffering. Buddha said that the root cause of suffering is desire which is known as 'Tanha'. Tanha comes in three forms which are known as 'Three Roots of Evil', which are the ultimate causes of suffering.
  - Greed and desire
  - Ignorance or delusion
  - Hatred and destructive urges

3. Nirvana (the truth of the cessation of suffering): Nirvana means to remove the three evils. Nirvana is a state of mind which is free from all negative emotions and fears. The final goal of Buddhism is Nirvana. It is a state in which person realises his or her connection with the universe. Every individual can practice Nirvana through the spiritual practice. Buddhism teaches that when a person attain Nirvana then he loses all the worries and desires which are the root cause of all sufferings.
4. Magga (the truth of the path to the cessation of suffering): According to Buddhism, Magga is the end of suffering. It is a some set of principles which is known as Eightfold Path. By practicing the eightfold path, a person can attain the ultimate wisdom.

**Eightfold Path:** Eightfold Path means the liberation from all worries and sufferings. Therefore, there is need of proper understanding of the Eightfold Path.

1. Samma Ditthi (Right View): Right View is the root principle of eightfold path. It is the starting point of destination. The purpose of this principle is that we have to create the views on the crucial issues beyond the theoretical views. Buddha teaches us that a human mind creates two types of views: right views and wrong views. If a person focuses on the right views he will do right actions. Therefore a person will free from all the sufferings. Right View is the deep understanding of the teachings of Dhamma.
2. Samma Sankappa (Right thought): Right thought is the mental activity of human mind. Human mind is always ready to opt new goals and new vision. Buddha explained right thought as threefold: thought of renunciation, thought of goodwill and thought of harmlessness. Buddha said that right thought leads to the attainment of Nibbhana, which is the ultimate goal of Buddhism. Right thought means the active engagement of human being in the world. When the thoughts are right, the actions will be right. Buddha explained that if a person holds the right view, his deeds, words, plans and purposes will lead to happiness.
3. Samma Vaca (Right Speech): According to Buddha, only Humans have the power of communication through words. Therefore the part of speech is very important. It can break relations, start wars, create enemies and it can also give wisdom and peace of mind. So the speech has both negative and positive perspectives. Buddha divides speech into fourfold: abstaining from false speech, abstaining from slanderous speech, abstaining from harsh speech, and abstaining from idle chatter.

4. **Samma Kammanta (Right Action):** The deeds which are basically performed by the body are known as right actions. The components of right actions are:
  - **Abstaining from taking life:** It means the killing of other human beings means the violation of the sentiments. The act of killing directly leads to the hatred and greed.
  - **Abstaining from taking which is not given:** It means that human beings should avoid the things to be violated which are directly belongs to others. Buddha explained some situations which should be avoided by human beings i.e. stealing, robbery, snatching, fraudulence, deceitfulness.
  - **Abstaining from sexual misconduct:** it focuses on the martial relations and martial union. According to Buddha, sexual conduct is right for both husband and wife. Both should be faithful with each other. Both should not take the risk of breakup because of outside partners.
5. **Samma Ajiva (Right Livelihood):** Right livelihood means one should live his or her life in right way. One should lead legal, honest, peaceful and happy life.
6. **Samma Vayama (Right Effort):** Right Effort plays an important role in Eightfold Path. It means that if a person has negativity in his or her personality, by right efforts removes the negativity. Right Effort is fourfold: the endeavour to discard evil that has already arisen, the endeavour to prevent the arising of unarisen evil, the endeavour to develop unarisen good and the endeavour to promote the good which has already arisen.
7. **Samma Sati (Right Mindfulness):** Right Mindfulness is concerned with body, feelings, thoughts and mind objects. Mindfulness means eradication of sufferings from human mind, presence of mind, attentiveness or awareness, open, quiet and alert mind. Human mind is always ready for present situation. Mindfulness considered as the best experience of human mind. According to Buddha, right mindfulness watches all the situations of human life and has the ability to take the right decisions.
8. **Samma Samadhi (Right Concentration):** Right concentration is the eighth path of eightfold path. It is the state of conscious mind. It is associated with the discipline of mind. Buddha explained that with the use of right concentration we can develop our focus wherever we want. With the help of right concentration we can do several things in our life. It will give the effect on body and mind. The body and mind will be free from all the negative thoughts.

### **Dhamma and equality:**

In Indian history, Buddha was the first person who thought about the mankind, abolishment of slavery, higher morality and idea of brotherhood. At the time of Buddha, India was suffering from rigid Varna System. Buddha declared:

*By birth is not one is outcaste,*

*By birth is not one is Brahmin,*

*By deeds is one is outcaste,*

*By deeds is one a Brahmin.*

Buddha stated the fact that, there are species and marks in the case of plants, insects, fishes, birds. But in the case of human beings, there are no specific species and marks. He questioned, how any human being can be considered as unequal? According to Buddhism caste and colour are not the roots to follow the rules of Sangha, where all are treated as equals. Buddha said that the doors of Dhamma are open for all. Buddha provided equal opportunities to all without any discrimination.

### **Dhamma and Women:**

At the time of Buddha, the status of women was pathetic. Buddha raised the status of women. He used the term for women 'matugama' which means 'mother of the society'. He did not humiliate women. At first he did not allow women in the monasteries, but Ananda and his mother Gautami discussed about the matter of admission of women in monasteries with Buddha. After discussion he allowed women in the monasteries but with some rules. Women hold important place in Buddhism. In ancient India, as is still seen today, the birth of a daughter in the family is not welcomed. But Buddha gave full freedom, equal opportunities and free atmosphere. In the monasteries, women despite their caste or rank met on a common ground. Because of equal opportunities provided by Buddha in Sangha many women played important role in the society and became Bikshunis. The names of the famous Bikshunis are Khema, Ananda, Patacara, Visakha, Suppiya, Mallika, Sumana, Subhadda.

### **Happiness:**

The Buddha does not expect that his followers thinking about the ills of life, so make their life unhappy. Various unbiased writers give their opinion that Buddhist people are the happiest people in the world. The members of the Nobel order lead the happiest life on the earth. According to Buddha, the highest level of happiness is Nibbana, which is free from all the suffering. The Buddha says:

“Suffering leads to confidence (Saddha); confidence to rapture (Pamojja); rapture to joy (Pitti); joy to tranquillity (Passaddhi); tranquillity to happiness (Sukha); happiness to concentration (Samadhi); concentration to knowledge and vision of things as they truly are (Yathabhutanadassana); the knowledge and vision of things as they truly are to repulsion (Nibbida); repulsion to non-attachment (Viraga); non-attachment to deliverance (Vimutti), deliverance to the extinction of passions (Khaye-Nana) i.e., to Arahantship.”

The passage clearly stated that how suffering can lead to happiness and then to sainthood.

### **Tolerance of Buddhism:**

Buddha said that there is no need to blindly follow the four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path of Buddhism. In Dhamma everything is practical and rational. Buddha himself practised what he taught. Dhamma can be verified by personal experiences and tested by anybody. There is no place of fanaticism and persecutions in Buddhism. Buddha was the first greatest missionary. Buddha emphasised on the intellect than the emotions. Dhamma is the teaching of the open mind, wisdom and compassion. The main perspective of Buddhism is discipline which is necessary for all living beings. Buddhism has spread and is still spreading throughout the world. Buddhism is not teaching miracles and mysteries. It is based on the practical experiences, scientific attitude, rationality and logic.

### **Conclusion**

Dhamma teachings are universal in nature and for all without any discrimination. According to Dhamma, a Buddhist is the citizen of the world. For a Buddhist there is no enemy no foreigner, no upper caste no lower caste, no male no female but all the human beings are equal. The teachings of Dhamma are based on scientific attitude, logical thinking, rationality, practicability, tolerance, universality, equality, brotherhood. Buddha Dhamma is an empire which is built on love and reason. That is why Buddhism is the noblest of all unifying and uplifting influences that has operated for more than 2500 years.

### **References**

- Narada (2016). *The Buddha and his teachings*. Jaico Publication House, Mumbai. ISBN: 81-7992-617-6
- Bhavat, P.V (1956). *2500 years of Buddhism*. The Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.tuvienquangduc.com.au/English/buddha/2500.Years.of.Buddhism.by.Prof.P.Y.Bapat.1956.pdf>
- Diskul, P.P (2010). *The Relevance of Buddhism in the modern world*. Buddhist Publication Society, Sri Lanka. Retrieved from:  
<https://what-buddha-said.net/library/Leaves/bl043.pdf>

- Nanamoli (2004). *The Buddha's Teachings in his own words. The Wheel Publication No. 428/29/30. Buddhist Publication Society, Sri Lanka.*
- R., Ravichandra (2014). *Buddhism and its relevance in modern world. Indian Journal of Research. Vol. 3 (7), PP.215-217. ISSN: 2250-1991*
- R.B, Allan (2012). *The original teachings of the Buddha. Charleston Buddhist Fellowship, Charleston SC USA. Retrieved from:*  
[https://www.academia.edu/37468987/Bomhard\\_The\\_Original\\_Teachings\\_of\\_the\\_Buddha](https://www.academia.edu/37468987/Bomhard_The_Original_Teachings_of_the_Buddha)
- D.K, Sheetal (2017). *The Buddha and his Dhamma: A Feminist Reading. 'Research Journey' International multidisciplinary E-research journal. Special Issue 19: 'Dr. B.R Ambedkar and Different Dimensions to Social Change. ISSN: 2388-7143*
- Hackmann, H. (2002). *Buddhism as a religion. Low Price Publications, Delhi. ISBN: 81-7536-282-0*
- Ambedkar, B.R (1956). *Buddha and his Dhamma. Retrieved from:*  
<http://www.enxarxa.com/biblioteca/AMBEDKAR%20Buddha%20and%20His%20Dhamma.pdf>
- Sangharakshita (2007). *The Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path. Windhorse Publications. ISBN: 9781-899579-81-5*