



An Outline Of Buddhism And Its Subsequent Evolution

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Abstract: *Bouddha Dharma* is based on the foundation of man and mind. It has done away with the superstition of God, soul, infallibility, sacrifices, worship, ceremonies, rites and rituals. Instead it discovers analyses and reasons the existence of facts, truths and knowledge. The doctrine of *Nama-rupa* is the logical negation of soul. Salvation is for man, not for soul, it is here and now and not after death. Truth is tested by perception and inference. This world is declared to be true and not illusion. *Bouddha Dharma* is a *Dharma* of faith and philosophy propagated by Gautama Buddha. It is the philosophy of life in the apparent sense. Sacrifice, loving-kindness and compassion, and wisdom are the three essential value of his life. The *Dhammapada* helps to understand the subject of *Bouddha Dharma* and the philosophical realization of the Gautama Buddha. *Dhammapada* is the compilation of religion principles. *Bouddha Dharma* is basically a principled *Dharma*. That principled *Dharma* has been described in the *Dhammapada* texts.

Index Term - Dharma, Dhamma, Nirvana, Prajna, Dukkha

I. INTRODUCTION

Gautama Buddha's life highlighted three essential values. They are sacrifice, loving-kindness and compassion, and wisdom. As often happens, some of the very first evidence of the Buddha's sacrifice manifested itself while he was still very young. Sacrifice is basically his recognition that all existence is suffering. In other words, seeing that life is full of suffering one begins to look for something more that is the quality of loving-kindness and compassion which is another essential value in the life of the Gautama Buddha. Wisdom is the third of the three qualities. Wisdom is the most important of the three qualities, because after all it is wisdom that opens the door to enlightenment. It is wisdom that uproots ignorance, the underlying cause of suffering. Wisdom is achieved primarily through meditation.¹ The Gautama Buddha was never a God who had supernatural powers over people's lives and futures. He was a human being, albeit and extraordinary one, who taught humankind that we have Buddha nature inside each of us and that we need to find it.

¹ Peter, Dr. D., *Fundamentals of Buddhism*, Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc., 1984, p-24

In this paper 'An outline of Buddhism and its subsequent evolution' highlights the basics classification of *Bouddha Dharma*. I discuss first of all *Buddhist Movement*, second Comparison between *Mahayana* and *Hinayan Buddhism*, and finally show that basics concept of *Bouddha Dharma*.

II. Buddhist movement

The founder of *Buddha Dharma* is Gautama Buddha. Buddha in his early life was the son of the *Kshatriya* shakya ruler, Shuddhodana and Mahamaya, born in the 600 B.C. his childhood name was Siddhartha, which means the wish fulfilled. The place of his birth is Lumbini, now it is in Nepal. Although he led a comfortable life within the palace walls, Siddhartha grew increasingly restless and curious about the world beyond it. He left his home one day and was shocked to see the sick, elderly and dying people, in the streets of his kingdom. The experience drew his attention to the sufferings of old age and death. He wished to find a way to liberate all conscious beings from the vicious cycle of suffering.

At the age of 29, Siddhartha left his place of heir to his father's throne and renounced all worldly pleasures. He travelled far and near in order to understand the true meaning of the suffering all around him. With concentration and enthusiasm, Siddhartha conquered the demons that tempted and confused him, and finally succeeded in his search for liberation. After six years of hard training and strict self-discipline, he found the answer to the question of suffering, its cause and the way to stop it. In doing so, Siddhartha attained enlightenment and became the Gautama Buddha. For the next 45 years, the Buddha journeyed throughout northeast of India, teaching and helping all those who listened to his philosophy of life. Gautama Buddha passed away at the age of 80, *Bouddha Dharma* and his legacy of the Sangha, still influences the existing world of religion.

During the time of the death of Gautama Buddha, a decision of the *Buddhasangit* was made to compile his teachings and sayings into the *Tripitaka*. The *Tripitaka* comprises three 'Pitakas' (baskets): the *Vinaya Pitaka*, the *Sutta Pitaka*, and the *Abhidhamma Pitaka*.

The *Tripitak* is an extensive body of Canonical Pali literature in which enshrined teachings of Gautama Buddha expounded for forty-five years from the time of his enlightenment to his *parinibbana*. The teaching of the Gautama Buddha covers a wide field of subjects and is made up of advice, expositions and instruction. Even from the earliest times some kind of classification and systematization of the Gautama Buddha's teachings had been made to facilitate memorization, since only verbal transmission was employed to pass on the teachings from generation to generation. All that the Gautama Buddha taught forms the subject matter and substance of the Pali Canon, which is divided into these three divisions called Pitakas which literally means baskets. Hence *Tripitaka* means three baskets or three separate divisions of the Buddha's teaching. Here the metaphor 'basket' signifies not so much the function of storing up anything put into it as its use as a receptacle in which things are handed on or passed on from one to another like carrying away of earth from an excavation site by a line of workers.²

The great division, in which there are organized instruction and admonitions of the Gautama Buddha on modes of conduct, and restraints on both bodily and verbal actions of bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, which form rules of discipline for them, is called the *Vinaya Pitaka*. So, *Vinay Pitaka* is the compilation of the rules of *Bouddha Dharma*. The general speech and sermons intended for both the bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, delivered by the Gautama Buddha on various occasions, are collected and classified in a great division known as the *Sutta Pitaka*. So, all the teachings of Buddha are compiled by *Sutta Pitakaa*. The philosophical aspect of the Gautama Buddha's teaching, more profound and abstract than the speech of the *Sutta Pitaka*, is classified under the great division known as the *Abhidhamma Pitaka*. This *Pitaka* deals with ultimate truths, explain ultimate truths and investigates mind and matter and the relationship between them. So, *Abhidhamma Pitaka* is actually a Buddhist scripture.³

Of these, *Sutta Pitaka (Nikaya)* is divided into five main parts: *Digha-nikaya*, *Majjhima-nikaya*, *Sanmyukta-nikaya*, *Anguttara-nikaya* and *Khuddaka-nikaya*. *Khuddaka-nikaya* is a collection of fifteen books, one of them being *Dhammapada*. The *Dhammapada* helps to understand the subject of *Bouddha*

² Ko Lay, U., *Guide to Tipitaka*, Buddhist e-Book library, Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc., p-18

³ Basu, C., *Dhammapad*, Karuna Prakashoni, Kolkata, p-17

Dharma and the philosophical realization of the Gautama Buddha. *Dhammapada* is the compilation of religion principles. Life is more familiar to Gautama Buddha's teaching of *Dharma* than this religion, which is the spoken *Dhamma*. The word *Dhamma* means *Nirvana* also and that the word *pada* means the way. In other words, the *Dhammapada* has been interpreted in the sense of the way of *Nirvana*.⁴

Gautama Buddha established the Sangha (community) of his *monks* (Bhikkhus) and the latter continued with his liberal truth. He wanted to free *Dhamma* from the insecurity and antiquity. *Bouddha Dhamma* was free from ritualism. This *Dhamma* has given the highest importance on self-effort. Although he did not propagate himself as a God, was later established as a God by the followers who introduce some rituals.

III. Comparison between *Mahayana* and *Hinayan Buddhism*

Bouddha Dharma is a religion and *Dharma* that encompasses a variety of traditions, beliefs and spiritual practices largely based on teachings attributed to the Buddha. The word '*Dharma*' means 'teaching and protecting'. By practicing the Buddha's teachings, we can shield ourselves from life's conflicts and sufferings. After Buddha's death *Buddhism* is divided into two main religious groups *Mahayana Buddhism* and *Hinayana Buddhism*. These two religious groups both share a lot of similarities. But have a few differences. We highlight some differences:

- *Mahayana Buddhism* believes that Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama) is a god but *Hinayana Buddhism* believes that *Buddha* was an ordinary human.
- *Mahayana Buddhism* followers think that *Buddha* is a *God* because they think that *Buddha* came down to earth to help people cross the sea of life. So *Buddha* can be worshipped as a *God* because he is eternal and comes down to earth. On the other hand *Hinayana Buddhism* thinks that *Buddha* was a Human instead of a *God* because *Buddha* was simply a man who found a way to *Nirvana*.
- *Mahayana Buddhism* followers think that it is better to help other reach *Nirvana* before you do and all who trust in the Buddha will reach *Nirvana*. On the other hand *Hinayana Buddhism* thinks that everyone needs to gain *Nirvana* by their own and only *Hinayana Buddhist* will reach *Nirvana*.
- *Mahayana Buddhism* followed with reference to higher beings, more like a religion. There is early text are in *Sanskrit* (e.g. *karma*, *dharma*). However, *Hinayana Buddhism* followed as a teaching or philosophy. There is early work written in *Pali* (e.g. *Kamma*, *dhamma*).

The philosophical concepts of *Anityavad* (instability), *Anatmavad* (not believing in soul and atheism) are the main contributions of the *Hinayana Buddhism*. *Vigyanvad* and *Shuyavad* are the philosophical contributions of the *Mahayana Buddhism*.

Above we have pointed out the fundamental difference between *Hinayana* and *Mahayana Buddhism* for obvious reasons. However, we must keep in mind that these are only two classes of *Buddhism*. The *Hinayana Buddhism* can be considered as an early stage of *Buddhism* and the *Mahayana* as an advanced stage.⁵

IV. Basics concept of *Bouddha Dharma*

Bouddha Dharma, the various traditions, beliefs and spiritual practices are largely based on the teachings of Gautama Buddha. He is recognized by Buddhists as an awakened or enlightened teacher who shared his insights to help sentient beings end their suffering by eliminating ignorance and lust.

The *Dhammapada* belongs to the *Sutta Pitaka*. In this text Gautama Buddha's own views are briefly pervaded. The name of the text is *Dhammapada*, but the question is what the real meaning of *Dhammapada* is? The meaning of *Dhammapada* can be understood by discussing the meaning of the word '*Dhamma*'.⁶ According to many, the word '*Dhamma*' means action, according to some it means reform. According to some, pain, intuition and renovation - these three aspects are included in the word '*Dhamma*'. Others say

⁴ Ahir, D. C., *Dhammapada Meaning and Message*, Buddhist World Press, New Delhi, 2009, p-74

⁵ <https://www.shareyoureassays.com/basic-differences-between-the-hinayana-and-mahayana-schools-of-buddhism>

⁶ Basu, C., *Dhammapad*, Karuna Prakashoni, Kolkata, p-5

that the word '*Dhamma*' means causation. What I am in the present moment is only as the result of what I was in the previous moment. I will be the next moment, but only the result of what I am in the present moment. Thus we are being created and destroyed as a result of action. The action of the present moment will generate action in the next moment; the action of the next moment will generate action in the next moment. We are always guided by this flow of action. Our happiness, sorrow, improvement, degradation depend on action. The sadness that I feel in the present moment is the result of my actions in the previous moment. Action is cause and sorrow is action. There is no difference between action and cause. What is considered a cause in the present moment is considered an action in the next moment. Again, whatever is done in the present moment is considered to be the cause in the previous moment. So the word *Dhamma* means cause and effect.

The *Dhammapada* is the most valuable book for the study of *Bouddha Dhamma*. It gives a brief picture of Buddhist thoughts and the Buddhist way of life. *Bouddha Dhamma* is in essence a way of life. *Dhammapada* is the ideal guide for anyone willing to follow the Buddhist way of life.

Buddhists believe that this is completed through the direct understanding and perception of dependent thought and the *Four Noble Truths*. *Four Noble Truths* are a very important aspect of the teachings of the Gautama Buddha. Their importance has been explained in no uncertain terms by the Gautama Buddha. He has said that it is because we fail to understand the *Four Noble Truths* that we have run on so long in this cycle of birth and death. The *Four Noble Truths* in a sense are a summary of the Buddha's teachings both from the point of view of doctrine or theory and also from the point of view of practice. The teachings on the *Four Noble Truths* are regarded as central to the teachings of *Buddha Dharma*, and to provide a conceptual framework for Buddhist thought. These four truths explain the nature of *dukkha*, its cause, and how it can be overcome. The four truths are: the truth of *dukkha*, the truth of the origin of *dukkha*, and the truth of the cessation of *dukkha* and path leading to the cessation of *dukkha*. The first noble truth explains the nature of *dukkha*. The second noble truth is that the origin of *dukkha* can be known. The third noble truth is that the complete cessation of *dukkha* is possible. The fourth noble truth identifies a path to this cessation. We have the foundation of the teaching of the Buddha for understanding and practice.

The *Four Noble Truths* divided quite naturally into two groups. The first two noble truths suffering and the cause of suffering belong to the realm of birth and death. The second two noble truths the end of suffering and the path to the end of suffering can be symbolized in terms of a spiral.

Four Noble Truths: The first Noble truth is *dukkha*. Gautama Buddha saw the suffering of living beings in the world (decay, disease, and death) and realized that everything is miserable. The *dukkha* of birth, the *dukkha* of old age, *dukkha* of disease, *dukkha* of death, *dukkha* of the loss of a loved one, the *dukkha* of connection of something unpleasant, the *dukkha* of not getting what one wishes to get. Even *dukkha* is mixed with what seems to be happy.

The second noble truth is origin of *dukkha*. According to *Bouddha Dharma*, nothing can happen without a reason. There is no such thing as unconditional. *Dukkha* is a phenomenon, so *dukkha* cannot happen without a reason. So the second truth is that there is a reason for *dukkha*.

According to *Buddha Dharma*, the cause of sorrow is birth. He has to suffer because the creature is born. The reason for birth is *Bhava*. That is the desire to be born again. The reason for the desire to be born again is *upadana*. The cause of this addiction or *upadana* is thirst. The cause of thirst is *vedana*. The cause of *vedana* is *sparsa*. The connection of the senses with the object required for the experience of sense-pleasure is *sparsa*. This connection would not arise had there not been the six organs of cognition, the five sense and manas (*sadayatana*). *Sadayatana* refers to the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin, and intuitive mind. *Sparsa* is not possible without the senses like eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin, and intuitive mind. These six organs depend for their existence on the mind-body organism (*nama-rupa*), which constitutes the perceptible being of man. The reason for this *sadayatana* is the '*nama-rupa*' or the organization of body-mind. This *nama-rupa* cannot exist without consciousness (*vijnana*). So the reason for the *nama-rupa* is consciousness (*vijnana*). The cause of consciousness (*vijnana*) is impressions (*samskara*). All the actions that an organism performs in previous life produce a kind of energy. This is the power of *samskara*. It is for

this *samskara* that the organism is reborn. The reason for the *samskara* is ignorance (*avidya*). Ignorance (*avidya*) is the root cause of all misery. *Avidya* means an accurate knowledge of the four noble truths. The chain of twelve causes from sorrow to ignorance or from ignorance to sorrow is called the *dvadasa nidana* or *bhavachakra*. In the third noble truth, the Gautama Buddha speaks of the prevention of *dukha* or the cessation of *dukha*. If ignorance (*avidya*) is destroyed, there will be an end to *dukha*.

The fourth noble truth is the path (*marga*) to the cessation of suffering or to liberation. There is a path (*marga*) - which Gautama Buddha followed and others can similarly follow - to reach a state free from *dukkha*. The path recommended by Gautama Buddha consists of eight steps or rules and is, therefore, called the eightfold path (*astangika-marga*). This gives the essentials of his ethics. This path is open to all, monks as well as common people.

These eight factors or eightfold path are: right view (*samyagdrsti*), right intention (*samyaksankalpa*), right speech (*samyagvak*), right action (*samyakkarma*), right livelihood (*samyagajiva*), right effort (*samyagvyayama*), right mindfulness (*samyaksmrti*) and right meditation (*samyaksamadhi*). These eight factors are name is *dharmachakra*. This is the universal symbol for *Bouddha dhamma*.

The eightfold path spoken of in the *four noble truths* has sometimes divided into three basic divisions:

1. Moral virtue/ *sila* (Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood)
2. Meditation/*samadh* (Right effort, Right mindfulness, Right concentration)
3. Wisdom/ *prajna* (Right view, Right intention)

Moral virtue is another name of *sila*. The word '*sila*' means morals or ethics. *Sila* is an important part of the eightfold path described in *Bouddha Dhamma*.⁷ It covers the ethical conduct and religious behavior developed by the *Buddha Dhamma*. The *Dhammapada* repeatedly refers to numerous, facets of moral and religious culture summed up by the term *Sila*. *Sila* is deeply connected with morality and religion. Gautama Buddha has spoken of innumerable virtues in his ethics.

The *prajna* is presented as the culmination of the path, whereas in the eightfold division the path starts with correct knowledge, which is needed to understand why this path should be followed. So the Noble Eightfold Path is the means of arriving at the goal of *Bouddha Dhamma*.

According to the Gautama Buddha, ignorance is the root cause of the suffering of living beings. It is because of ignorance that living beings become addicted to desires. He says that by wisdom, that is, by perfect knowledge, by virtue, by perfect conduct, and by *Samadhi*, that is, by meditation, the living entity will be able to conquer all desires or thirsts. Wisdom is the true knowledge by which ignorance can be destroyed. *Sila* is the perfect behavior by which the mind is purified, refrains from all evil deeds and acts in a holy mind. As a result, there is no addiction to living things. Again, through *Samadhi* or meditation, the sorrow of the living being is completely eliminated.

Another element of *Bouddha dharma* is *brahmavihara*.⁸ *Brahmavihara* can be divided into 'Brahma' and 'Bihra', which is often considered in English as 'sublime' or 'divine abode'. *Moitri*, *kruna*, *mudita*, *upeksha* – these four types of *brahmanbihar* are in *Bouddha Dharma*. *Maitri* (loving-kindness) means active benevolence towards all. *Karuna* (compassion) means the result of friendship; it identifies the suffering of others as one's own. *Mudita* (empathetic joy) means feeling happy because others are happy, even if no one contributes to it, it is a form of sympathetic joy. *Upeksha* (equality) means equal attitude and purity, treating everyone impartially.

V. Conclusion

⁷ Ahir, D. C., *Dhammapada Meaning and Message*, Buddhist World Press, New Delhi, 2009, p-79

⁸ Venerable Piyadassi, T., *The Buddha His Life and Teachings*, Buddhanet's e-Book Library, p-67

The *Dharma* of Gautama Buddha is the universal religion. It's not the religion of any particular community. His *Dharma* is the religion of man. His thoughts revolve around people. He strives for the liberation of all mankind. He preaches love, mercy and friendship to all. His generous words won the hearts of many on earth. His teachings of love, compassion, and friendship gave people hope. At the same time it inspired people with new *Dharma* and moral consciousness.

Old age, disease and death - these three things moved the mind of Gautama Buddha. He realized that the world was miserable and that human life was miserable. One question kept repeatedly up in his mind - how can people get salvation of this misery? He immersed himself in severe hardness to eliminate the suffering of the world and the living. By attaining hardness, he realizes Bodhi or Truth. In the light of this truth, he found four truths which are known as *Four Noble Truths*. The purpose of *Bouddha Dharma* lies in these four truths. The theory that we get based on his friendship, non-violence and advice is *Bouddha Dharma*.

Indian philosophy is dynamic. There are various arguments and doctrines here. Many religious doctrines have emerged in this country. All our philosophies are therefore made of different metals. Humans are the best creatures in the world. His mind, intellect, knowledge, etc. are indicative of infinite power. In a changing world, it is not possible for anything to be stable. According to Gautama Buddha, one who observes everything in the world with perfect knowledge realizes the impermanence of everything in this world. Gautama Buddha said, there can be nothing in the impermanent world. The world is miserable because of this impermanence. He does not speak of reincarnation but of reincarnation? According to him, people are reborn after death due to thirst, not action. His theology is based on the four noble truths. So Gautama Buddha's theology flows in different currents. So this theology revealed by Gautama Buddha started a new horizon in Indian philosophy.

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