Window to the vast wisdom of The Buddha

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Tipitaka, the Buddhist religious text still preserving the teachings of the lord buddha is the way to penetrate deeper into Buddhism. Tipitaka which is comprised of “Ti” meaning three and “pitaka” meaning basket, they are namely Vinaya Pitaka, Sutta Pitaka and Abhidhamma. All dealing with different phenomenon taught by the buddha in that time. The Pitakas were compiled by different authors in various council held in various places.

Vinaya pitaka “the basket of rules” recited in first council by Ven. Upali held after 3 months of the Mahaparinirvana of Lord Buddha in the Sattapanni cave at Vehera mount in Fajagaha(india). The council was presided over by Ven Mahakassapa thera attended by 500 monks and supported by king ajatashatru. It deals with rules depicted by the Buddha to be practiced at each Buddhist monastery by Bhikkhus, Bhi

Sutta Pitaka “the basket of discourses” recited by ven Ananda in the 1st council held in Sattapanni cave, Rajgaha at the same time as of Vinaya pitaka. It was written in the fourth council which was held in Sri-Lanka. The pitaka consist of various divisions, they are namely,

1. Digha Nikaya: Long Discourses
2. Majjhima Nikaya: Middle Length Discourses
3. Samyutta Nikaya: Connected Discourses
4. Anguttara Nikaya: Numerically Ordered
5. Khuddaka Nikaya: Compact Treatise
   - Khuddakapatha: Compact Handbook
   - Dhammapada: Path to Wisdom
   - Udana: Solemn Utterances
   - Itivuttaka: Inspired Sayings.
   - Sutta Nipata: Treatise on Important Discourses
   - Vimana Vatthu: An Account on Divine Tales
   - Petavatthu: Stories of Divine Ones Departed Spirits
   - Theragatha: Tnspired Verses of The Elder Monks
   - Theri Gatha: Inspired Verses of The Elder Nuns
   - Jataka: Stories of Past Lives of Buddha
Abhidhamma is one of the three baskets which deals with some deeper insights of human mind. An ancient way to penetrate deeper in the course of mental phenomenon. The term “Abhidhamma” is made up of two words ‘Abhi’ + ‘Dhamma’. Abhi means mastering from inside to outside, allover totally, taking possession and mastering. And as for Dhamma generally known as the teachings of lord Buddha. it is psychological and philosophical (psycho-philosophical) discussion of mundane and supramundane themes.

There are seven books in Abhidhamma pitaka:

1) Dhammasangini (Book of Phenomenon)
2) Vibanga (Book of Analysis)
3) Dhatukhatha (Book of Elements)
4) Puggala Pannati (Book of Human)
5) Kathavatthu (Book of Controversies)
6) Yamaka (Book of Pairs)
7) Patthana (Book of Relations)

Abhidhamma does not advocate the reality of world and beings. According to it a person is combination of five constituents (pancakhanda) of physical (rupa) form, of feeling or sensations (vedana), of perception (sannakhana), of predispositions or subconscious formations (sankharakhanda), of consciousness (vinnanakkhana). These five khandas in living being are designated as aggregates of clinging (upadanakkhanda).

In the words of the buddha ‘Sabbe sankhara anicca, sabbe sankhara dukkha, sabbe sankhara anatta, i.e. all creations are transient and unreal and can hardly bring happiness.

The general discourses and sermons intended for both the bhikkhus and lay disciples, delivered by the buddha on various occasions are collected and classified in a great division known as Sutta pitaka. The great division in which are incorporated injunctions and admonitions of the buddha on the modes of the conduct, and restraints on both bodily and verbal actions of bhikkhus and bhikkunis which form rules of discipline for them, is called Vinaya pitaka. The philosophical aspect of the buddhas teaching more profound and abstract than the discourses of the Sutta pitaka is classified under the great divisions known as Abhidhama pitaka. Abhidhamma deals with Paramattha sacca (ultimate truth) investigating mind and matter.

If we analyze the level of Tipitaka studies being conducted the result is something like Sutta pitaka is taught -learned more in comparison to Vinaya pitaka and Abhidhamma is taught-learned much lesser with that of Vinaya. Although in the past centuries Abhidhamma was an important subject of study in Buddhist centers of education, it is now less studied only in Burma and Sri Lanka.

Whereas the country where it was propounded, explained, given as sermon by the supreme one itself has lost its existence. Indian Varsities do offer courses like B.A., M.A., Ph.d. and many more in Buddhist studies but syllabus are more focused on the rise of Buddhism, spread, decline, emperors and personalities of that time rather than the spreading the original teachings. The country is day by day sinking in ignorance and society is moving towards ill will this is the time like never ever before to spread the teachings of buddha on a huge basis in his own homeland.