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GRT THE BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE ON THE WAYS TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND REALIZING WORLD PEACE

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Abstract:-Buddhism has long been celebrated as a religion of peace and non-violence. With its increasing vitality in regions around the world, many people today turn to Buddhism for relief and guidance at the time when peace seems to be a deferred dream more than ever, with the wars in the Middle East and Africa. The Buddhism and Buddhist approach is the right path, perfect practical and accomplished for the destination of 'Peace'. The present study is an attempt to the Buddhist perspective on the ways to prevent violence and realizing world peace.

Keywords: Buddhism, Peace, Violence,

1.INTRODUCTION:

Buddhism is a religion based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, who lived about 25 centuries ago in what is now Nepal and northeastern India. He came to be called "the Buddha," which in Sanskrit means "awakened one," after he experienced a profound realization of the nature of life, death and which brings liberation from suffering. Buddhism has long been celebrated as a religion of peace and non-violence. With its increasing vitality in regions around the world, many people today turn to Buddhism for relief and guidance at the time when peace seems to be a deferred dream more than ever, with the wars in the Middle East and Africa. This is never a better time to re-examine the position of Buddhism, among those of other world religions, on peace and violence in the hope that it can be accorded in the global efforts to create new sets of values regarding the ways people manage conflict and maintain peace via nonviolent means. Buddhism, having enjoyed a long history and enrichment by generations of people in various traditions, ranges north and south with branches across many cultures and regions. However, a common core of Buddha's teaching and practice is observed in major Buddhist traditions and considered essentials of Buddhism.

Eternal peace is the dream vision of civilization in the history of mankind. The present world is now grasped by violence and horror. Men are now in quest of eternal peace. It is a matter of regret that we, the human beings, are trying to stop wars with the help of more wars. But violence cannot be stopped by violence. Violence creates more violence; hatred makes more hatred; wars breed more wars; bloodshed brings more bloodsheds. Every creature in this universe wants peace. No creature wants sufferings and sorrow. But peace is extremely difficult to be obtained in this universe. The Buddhism and Buddhist approach is the right path, perfect practical and accomplished for the destination of 'Peace'.

2. THE CONCEPT OF PEACE

According to the Lord Buddha's teachings, equality is the principal weapon to eradicate all kinds of sufferings, discriminations, oppressions, repressions, unrest, hatred and violence. So, equality must be established among the human beings in the society. Equality is the fundamental pillar of Buddhist approach towards world peace. It is equality that can ultimately bring about peace in this universe. The present world is full of crises and eternal peace is now a crying issue. We can see poverty, hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy, epidemics, genocides, murders, famine, natural disasters, ignorance, diseases, discriminations, oppressions, was, abuse of nuclear weapons etc. all over the world. All these crises are created by inequality. People have been thinking of equality and inequality in the world since the very primitive time of human civilization. But unfortunately they could not establish peace and equality among themselves. But people are conscious of peace and equality and there is a need to realize the real significance and proper method to exercise equality.

The practice of equality is realized in Buddhism. The Buddhist monks wear a special yellow-colored set of clothes. It

is a symbol of equality. All monks have to wear this particular dress in general. As the Buddhists instinctively believed in equality they could spread Buddhism and the Lord Buddha's teachings all over India. Subsequently, Buddhism was not only confined in India but it also was disseminated all over the world. The Buddhists fundamentally believe in a total culture of equality. So they respect other's opinions and viewpoints. So, it is crystal clear that mutual respect is not only the basic foundation of equality, but it also is a perfect arrangement of peace and progress.

According to Buddhism there are three dimensions of peace. They are inner peace; peace in the community of humankind; and ecological peace or peace with Earth.

"With respect to the state of inner peace, Tranquility of mind comes from having successfully transcended greed, hatred and ignorance. It is made clear that the Buddhist approach to peace starts from the fundamental act of surmounting the deluded impulses or inner poisons called greed, hatred and ignorance. The state of having brought these impulses under control, however, is not a static and private inner peace. Rather, it is limitlessly dynamic, expansive and evolutionary in its nature. , through spiritual practice the energy inherent in our deluded impulses can be transformed in its entirety into the illuminating "flame" of enlightened wisdom. Thus, the three poisons can be subdued so that they no longer produce confusion and disruption; they can no longer drive us to act in a bizarre and destructive manner. It is for this reason that this transcendence of deluded impulses is known as inner tranquility.

Secondly, with regard to the dimension of social peace, or peace in the community of human kind, it includes the abolition of nuclear weapons and the reduction of economic disparity. It is an ongoing efforts to promote public education regarding these and other global issues and efforts to provide concrete humanitarian support for the world's refugees and displaced persons. With respect to these questions of security and development, Buddhism upholds the principle of non-violence and calls for a fundamental transformation in our way of life. At the individual level, this means a transformation from a way of life dominated by attachment to material desires to one more focused on spiritual and existential values. At the same time, it also means a compassionate way of life, of being ready to make those efforts required to ensure that the citizens of developing countries can have their basic needs fulfilled. It is felt that humankind will be best served when each religious tradition engages in its own characteristic struggle against the three poisons of hatred, greed and ignorance, while cooperating toward the resolution of global issues. This is how Buddhism views the key concepts of cultural pluralism and religious tolerance.

Coming to the third dimension, "peace with the ecosystem," the Buddhist perspective on nature has always pointed to creative coexistence with nature. Shakyamuni's compassion was not limited to humankind but extended to all living things. The philosophical basis for sustainable development can be found in this kind of creative symbiosis with the rest of the natural world. Such a philosophical outlook will support the kind of lifestyle that is truly in harmony with the eco system. In resolving the global challenges confronting humanity, political, economic and scientific measures must be pursued together with a transformation of human consciousness. Everyone should establish a lifestyle of conserving energy, recycling resources and pursuing spiritual values. Our overarching goal should be to cultivate a shared awareness of our common humanity and of solidarity with the living organism that is Earth. As we move toward that awareness, we must develop the wisdom to properly direct toward beneficial ends of the life sciences, including the burgeoning field of genetic engineering. Thus Buddhist approach to peace, offers important common ground with other traditions. The cause of a truly comprehensive and lasting peace can most effectively be furthered by ceaselessly expanding circles of friendship and understanding through dialogue, exchange and cooperation.

1. Violence and Conflict

Buddhism, being a religion with a claim of the reality of existence, has well acknowledged causal forces that could constitute the hindrance to a harmonious living on every level of human actions. Violence and conflict, from the perspective of Buddhist principle of dependent origination, are, same with everything else in the world, a product of causes and conditions. To eliminate violence and conflict, all we have to do is to resolve the underlying causes and conditions.

1.1. External causes

The Buddha looks at the external causes of conflict as consequences derived from a general orientation common to all living beings: avoiding harm and obtaining happiness. Anything contrary to this would result in disturbing one's peace and lead to conflict. If people want to live an ultimately happy life with no harms toward themselves at all, the Buddha teaches, they should start with avoiding causing harm to others, physically and verbally at the personal level, since people are afraid of physical violence and resent harsh words; and the physical and verbal harm we inflict upon others usually leads to hate and conflicts that, in turn, would bring harm to us and cost our happiness. In larger contexts, Buddhism recognizes the indirect form of violence in the social systems to be external causes of conflicts as well.

1.2. Internal causes

External verbal and physical wrongdoings as well as social injustice are causing conflicts and violence, Buddhism contends that these behaviors and structures originate all from the state of human mind, since the violence and injustice are

responses toward external stimuli produced by people's inner mind operation. That is, the deeper causes of any conflict lie internally in the mental operations within each being. For example, confronted with the threat of physical and verbal harm, it is natural for us to feel fear, dislike, resentment, anger or hate. Out of this negative caste of mind, we would again resort to a violent response, and hence a conflict arises. Similarly, institutions or groups would respond to adversity with establishing policies or laws trying to protect whatever interest they perceive to be under threat or attack, which would cause conflicts since others' interest and well-being might be undermined by these measures. In other words, physical and structural violence are the product of human mental status such as fear, anger, and hate, which are considered in Buddhism to be the internal causes to violence and conflicts.

1.3. Root causes

Behind the mental, behavioral and structural causes of violence and conflict, Buddhism goes even further to the ultimate fundamental cause leading to all the suffering inflicted by violence and conflict. Buddhism attributes all our attachments, the resulting harming behaviors and the suffering hence caused, to the human ignorance (avijja), that is, we cannot see the world as it is and see our self as such. We are ignorant to the cosmic reality that everything in the world is inter-related, interdependent. Not adopting the Buddhist worldview, we thought we are separate from others as an independent entity: our views are different from theirs; our properties are certainly not theirs. Hence we develop our attachments to views and desires through the reinforcing notions of "me" and "mine." We are not impartial in looking at things. We tend to focus on the harm that is done to us, instead of examining the whole event in its context with all the causes and conditions conducive to its happening. This ignorance to the principle of dependent origination alienates us from what really happens in the situation and the complex set of conditions around any given event, and thus rids us of the possibility of making correct assessment of the event and reacts accordingly in time. This ignorance is what Buddhism identifies as the very root cause of violence, conflict, and war, which prevents human beings to live a peaceful life.

2. Approaches to prevent Violence and attain Peace

The Four Noble Truths: The first two truths discern the Causes of violence and conflict and the suffering caused thereby: First, life inevitably involves suffering/dissatisfaction (duhkha-satya); and second, suffering/dissatisfaction originates in desires (samudaya-satya). The third and the fourth prescribe the cure for this unpleasant way of living, that is, how to promote a peaceful way of living and ultimately live in peace: Third, suffering/dissatisfaction will cease if all desires cease (nirodha-satya); and fourth, this state can be realized by engaging in the Noble Eightfold Path (marga-satya).

Intra-personal Peace

To achieve peace within a person, the Buddhist approach is to observe and reflect upon the conditions in the external and mental operations, and then to decide on the most appropriate course of action as response to the outer and inner environments. With the most adequate response, we would not do harm to ourselves as well as not harbor negative feelings and thoughts toward other. Before taking any external action to realize peace, the first step for any Buddhist would be to look at ourselves and the events happening around us carefully and honestly, "not sugarcoating anything about the realities of life, consciousness, or culture". This approach does not only work on the personal level, many contemporary Buddhist leaders of peace movements give first priority to inner transformation within individuals on the path to peace in larger contexts. It encourages people who would like to engage themselves in peace activism to prepare themselves in advance by developing awareness and mindfulness for practicing peace, that is, reacting "calmly and intelligently, in the most nonviolent way possible." Inner practice on nonviolence is hence considered a prerequisite to peace workers and educators.

Five Precepts as Practice of Interpersonal Peace:

- 1) To abstain from taking life,
- 2) To abstain from taking what is not given,
- 3) To abstain from sensuous misconduct,
- 4) To abstain from false speech,
- 5) To abstain from toxicants as tending to cloud the mind.

The following the Precepts would prevent violence toward self and others by no wrongful acts on physical, economic, familial and verbal levels in interpersonal interactions, which is essential to any peaceful living. Among contemporary efforts toward peace, the Five Precepts are hailed by many peace scholars and activists as the daily practice of peace and contends that the absolute rejection of committing direct violence as prescribed in the Five Precepts is the "basic contribution of Buddhism in the creation of peace". In fact, many components of today's conflict prevention program in schools and communities have the Five Precepts incorporated.

In-group Peace

Six Principles of Cordiality as the Practice of In-group Peace:

The principles of cordiality prescribe that in private and in public, one maintains

- 1) Bodily acts,
- 2) Verbal acts
- 3) Mental acts of loving-kindness toward other group members,
- 4) Shares material gains with others,
- 5) Follows the same codes of conducts, and
- 6) Holds the same view that would lead "one who practices in accordance with it to the complete destruction of suffering".

The first three principles focus on the direct impact of individual group member's acts upon other members, the last three refer to the indirect structural and cultural impact. These procedures are very similar to those advocated by conflict management and organizational communication scholars of our own time. Many peace education activities engaging people in participatory decision-making, problem-solving, consensus building and open discussion bear a remarkable resemblance to what Buddhist have been doing in their assemblies since the days of the Buddha.

Inter-group Peace

In the inter-group, the Buddhist insistence on dialogue and nonviolence still rings true. The Buddha once tells a story of the King of Longevity to illustrate his stance on war and retribution while facing violence or foreign invasion. In the story, the king, when his country was invaded by another king, gave up the armory defense to protect the lives of his people. He also asked his son not to seek revenge for the brutal death of him and his wife. Later, when the son had three opportunities to kill the enemy king, he did not do so, following his father's last words, and explained everything to the enemy king. The enemy king, deeply moved, regretted his past wrongdoing and returned the land he had invaded. As the moral of the story, the Buddha concludes that "if one seeks retribution for vengeance through vengeance, the chain can never be broken" (Taisho 1: 26). This emphasis on absolute nonviolence is exemplified in the Buddha's intervention while his home country of the Sakyans was to be invaded by a neighboring country.

The practices and achievements not only demonstrates a realistic alternative to the international politics but also provides a living proof of the feasibility of the Buddhist principle of peace in today's world that is very different from the one Buddhism evolved. From the intrapersonal to the international, Buddhist approaches to peace at different levels can be well situated in an integrated model of peace building and peace keeping in the contemporary world.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Buddhism with its worldview is characterized by dynamic interdependence and its behavioral codes stressing non-violence and loving-kindness offers rich resources for peacemaking techniques. In the Buddhist conception of peace, all causes of violence and peace are interrelated and mutually influential; and the interrelations between violence at all levels are assumed and hence demands a multi-lateral comprehensive approach to stopping violence and promoting peace at all levels. One recent common trend in research on peace and violence is to explore the links between interpersonal, collective, national, and global levels of violence. This need is more pressing than ever since we live in a world of plural religious traditions that, from time to time, are accredited as causing conflicts, even wars. The Buddhist approaches to peace can be substantiated through the above model of peace by proving that nonviolence does work and can strengthen the beliefs that absence of violence is never productive without non-violence practiced at all levels of human activities and the true value of nonviolence, compassion and altruism advocated by Buddhism would also inspire all people towards the path of peacemaking which is an imminent, common responsibility mandated by the interdependent nature of our existence and therefore to be shared by every one of us.

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