

# Relevance of Buddha Dharma for World Peace

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The first priority of any human being on this earth is a harmonious peaceful life with all living beings. However, fulfillment of this requirement became a difficult task today with short sighted self interests of individuals. Uneven distribution of resources, selfishness of people, lack of proper education and greediness for the power are some of the main causes that jeopardize the world peace.

Peace is the essential teaching of Buddhism. We have read in books that two groups of people (Sakya and Koliya) in India became enemies because of water in Ganga River in Buddha's time. Buddha managed to prevent a huge bloodshed in between those two groups through his teaching.

Every one of us is suffering due to lack of peace within our selves as well as among us. Some people suffer directly by injuries and death in wars while others suffering indirectly with sickness, hunger, fear, anger and frustration that resulted due to wars. If we want to stop this suffering, we have to identify the real cause and start of suffering. In Buddha dharma it was explain that the craving (*tanha*) as the main cause of suffering and it was categorized into main three groups as; greed (*lobha*), aversion (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). Nothing in this world is perfect or adequate to expectations of human beings. Desire to achieve power, status, and prestige are increase with cravenness and defilements such as jealousy, condemnation, rejection, arrogance, anger and violence results as consequences. This situation brings the world peace under risk.

Main two principals in Buddha's teaching are: the Four Noble Truths (*Chaturarya Satya*) and the Noble Eightfold Paths (*Ariya Atthangika Magga*) (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1994). The Four Noble Truths explains; 1. Different kind of suffers 2. Causes giving rise to suffering 3. Eradicated status of suffering and 4. Paths to eradication of

suffering. The Noble Eightfold Paths (right view, right intension, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration) explains the way to right recognition of suffering and right paths to eradicate causes of suffering. Components in these two principals are integrated and control each other.

I am trying in this paper to elaborate the relevance of the factors in above two principals for the achievement of world peace. If world leaders, policymakers, and peace makers can recognize sufferings and right causes for sufferings that resulted due to lack of world peace, it is easy for them to recognize correct paths to achieve world peace.

**Right view (*Samma ditthi*):** Recognition of the reality of sufferings and true causes of sufferings explains in Buddha's teaching as right view. In a violence situation peace makers must have a good knowledge to recognize true causes for the situation. Decisions and actions they take are depending on their view of the situation. If they are clever to cultivate right view, it will steer them towards right action known as wholesome (*kusala*) in Buddha dharma. If they recognize false causes (wrong views), selection of wrong paths and bad actions or unwholesome (*akusala*) will be the end result. It will lead them to continue and accelerate the suffering. Unwholesome actions such as destroying life, taking what is not given, wrong conduct in regard top sense pleasures, false speech, slanderous speech, harsh speech, idle chatter, covetousness, ill will, and wrong view are common features under violence situations.

**Right intension (*Samma sankappa*):** There are three categories of right intension explain in Buddha dharma; 1. the intention of renunciation, 2. the intention of good will, and 3. the intention of harmlessness. Peace makers or peace facilitators might have different intensions. Some are planning to reach to their desires through peace implementation process while others intension is to establish true peace even through their sacrifices. They are trying hard to get free sufferers from their pain and want them to be happy. In Buddha dharma this kind of good thoughts explains as right intension. The peaceful mind only will cultivate all three folds of right intention. It was explained in Buddha dharma that we have to maintain four moral functions (*Brahma Viharas*) to achieve peace in our mind; (1) *Metta* - loving kindness; (2) *Karuna* – compassion or

kindness; (3) *Muditha* – happiness in other’s success, and (4) *Upekkha* - the maintenance of a balanced mind between negative and positive effects inherent in life. All these four functions should be cultivated internally and will help to have right intensions. Right intension helps to recognize right view because emotional predictions influence views. When right view prevails, the end result is wholesome actions through right intension.

**Right speech (Sammavacha):** Unwholesome actions that people do through words are categorized as false speech, slanderous speech, harsh speech, and idle chatter in Buddha dharma. Right speech explain in Buddha’s teaching as the refrain from words that make harm to others. As a human being we have the power to do many good or bad things through our words. As it was explain by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994), speech can destroy lives, create enemies and start wars or it can give wisdom, make friends and create peace. The distance between people brought much closer today with the development of new technology and increase the speed of communication among them. If this new development use with right speech, no one will get hurt through our words. It will improve the quality of life through mutual trust, friendship, and loving kindness and will improve the efficacy of the use of facilities.

**Right action (Samma Kammanta):** Buddha explained three categories of unwholesome actions that we do using our body; 1. killing or physically hurting to some one 2. taking what is not given and 3. sexual misconduct.

Every one likes to live and fear of death. No one has right to taking of life of others. Today we see and hear about wars and struggles all over the world and many people kill and hurt each other. Acts of killing can be driven by greed, hatred, or delusion (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1994). If we cultivate peace in our mind as Buddha taught us, our mind will be free from greed, hatred, and delusion and will not form morals to taking of life. If people can understand this reality world will be free from blood sheds.

Some people greed to obtain things from others and they never satisfied with what they have. Material, power, status or friendship might be the sort of things that are not given. Stealing, robbing, snatching, fraudulence and deceitfulness are some of the ways

that people use to obtain those not given things. Increase of anger, enemies, and sufferers are some of the consequences of wrong acquisition. There will be no peace under this situation.

**Right livelihood (*Samma-ajiva*):** Some people live and earn wealth honestly through right actions while others earn wealth dishonestly through wrong actions. In Buddha's teaching, the acquisition of wealth through wrong actions such as weapon business, meat industry, businesses such as slavery and prostitution, poison industry and industry of intoxicants were recognized as wrong way of living. All these actions entail harm to livelihood of others. This kind of trades encourages to do wrong actions such as killing people using weapons.

It is very common to see strikes of workers all over the world very often and some of them end up after loosing several lives. If power holders or employers misuse the energy of workers they are coming out and strike for their demands. On the other hand workers also have the responsibility to provide quality work for their wages. Two of these groups must respect to each others rights and should not miss use them. Otherwise there will be no peace in this kind working environment.

**Right effort (*Samma-vayama*):** In buddha's teaching right effort is explain as; 1. effort to stop the emergence of unwholesome actions, 2. effort to eliminate unwholesome actions that already emerged, 3. effort to give emergence to wholesome actions, and 4. effort to improve wholesome actions that already emerged. Right view and right intension lead us to right effort. If we succeed with right effort there will be no fights, no killings, no chance of taking not given things and peace and wisdom will be the end results.

**Right Mindfulness (*Samma-sati*):** Right effort can be succeed if we do it with consciousness. We have five senses to understand our surrounding and we have to be aware on all happenings within us as well as around us. Right mindfulness or right understanding will lead us to select easy and correct paths to succeed our right efforts.

**Right Concentration (*Samma-samadhi*):** We must cultivate the ability of concentration in our mind. In Buddha's teaching we were advised to conduct different meditation practices to improve concentration ability in our mind. Every right action must be operating through right concentration. It will yield us happy results at the end.

Guidance of our life path by following Noble Eightfold Paths qualities will make our life happy, harmonize the society and will bring ever lasting world peace.

### **References**

The Noble Eightfold Path: The Way to the End of Suffering by Bhikkhu Bodhi (1994)

<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/waytoend.html>