



Universal Responsibility for a Sustainable World Peace: Buddhist Initiative

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Abstract

Our every day starts with news of violence, war, crime and distress. Science and technology gave us a very comfortable life in many ways but still we all are facing many basic problems. Real happiness and the best quality of life are not totally depending on external comfort which comes through materialistic world but Inner peace is also equally important to lead a good life. We all wish for world peace; the Engage Buddhism is a path to follow the Buddhist teachings in daily life. Buddhism taught us that the situation of the war and peace is basically depends upon us or an individual only, because an individual is a unit that constitutes the whole society. Under present circumstances and conditions, it is very important to change our understanding about the social responsibility. We need to change an individual through a noble mindset so that we can achieve goal of universal happiness and world peace. This research looks practical applications to establish world peace is not a fantasy but we can make it real.

Keywords: Engage Buddhism, World Peace, Science, Meditation.

Introduction

The entire world is our home and to establish peace and harmony in our home is our prime duty. We cannot wait for others to carry out our duties. We all are human and our approach towards world's peace is our prime responsibility. Our every day starts with news of violence, war, crime and distress. Science and technology gave us a very comfortable life in many ways but still we all are facing many basic problems. There is unusual low rate of literacy, yet this idea of universal education does not seem to have served much goodness, but it has only further increased mental unrest and displeasure as its substitute. The outer peace and comfort comes with the advancement of technology but it is not at all helpful to achieve the goal of world's peace. Real happiness and the best quality of life are not totally depending on external comfort which comes through materialistic world but Inner peace is also equally important to lead a good life. We all wish for world peace; the engage Buddhism is a path to follow the Buddhist teachings in daily life. We can resolve all those *kaleshas*¹ that affect our inner peace. In this regard the Samath and Vipassana meditation is a very effective and well tested means to cultivate sustainable peace of mind taught by the Shakyamuni Buddha. This is the only way to attain a peaceful mind. If a person doesn't have a disciplined mind with inner peace one cannot fulfill the dream of world peace that's what the Buddhist teachings underline.

“Do not commit any sin; accumulate all that is virtues.

Discipline own mind completely; that is the teachings of the Buddha.”²

For the future of humanity we need to check where we are engaged in mistaken practices; there are two steps which are very important in life for an individual-first the self-examination and second one is self-correction. How we behave in our society is very important and it shows our attitude towards others. If we start this practice from an individual to complete society we never do wrong practices and we will be able to correct our own wrong attitude.

Buddhism taught us that the situation of the war and peace is basically depends upon us or an individual only, because an individual is a unit that constitutes the whole

¹Defilement — *lobha* (passion), *dosa* (aversion), and *moha* (delusion) in their various forms, which include such things as greed, malevolence, anger, rancor, hypocrisy, arrogance, envy, miserliness, dishonesty, boastfulness, obstinacy, violence, pride, conceit, intoxication, and complacency.

²The Dhammpada.V.183.

society. Now, whether we want peace or war is absolutely our own choice. Because, in this world enmity cannot be overcome by the enmity. Peace and the tolerance in the society can be established only through

love and compassion. All religions proclaim the same message of peace as Buddhism do. Broadly it can be understood that the Buddhism is the Religion of Peace.

As the classical Buddhist text The Dhammpada vividly mentions that; *“Hatred is never appeased by hatred. Hatred is only appeased by Love (or, non-enmity). This is an eternal law.”*³

As per the Buddhist teaching first we need to overcome our hatred then only the dream of world peace could be truly realized. The Buddhist thought highlights that a person who has the peaceful mind can only have the peaceful speech and can act peacefully. Unfortunately, Many of us do not possess peaceful mind, therefore, we are unable to take initiatives for creating a long lasting peace within and without.

Shantideva; a great poet belong to Mahayana Buddhism in 8th century has expressed the same thought in his writings; text famed as The Bodhicaryavatara, he wrote about the harmful extremes of Hatred.

*“There is no evil equal to hatred, and no spiritual practice equal to forbearance. Therefore, one ought to develop forbearance, by various means, with great effort.”*⁴

*“One’s mind finds no peace, neither enjoys pleasure or delight, nor goes to sleep, nor feels secure while the dart of hatred is stuck in the heart”*⁵

Buddhism teaches us that fundamentally the ignorance is the root cause of the hatred, desire and greed. The wrong notion of our self-existence is the basis of this ignorance. Because of ignorance we always thought that our existence is permanent and independent. Because of this wrong notion we thought that we are not connected with others in this world and my act is not going to affect others; but it’s not true. When human beings start fighting for lesser ends, they lose the basic spirit of the humanity which is the strong bond

³The Dhammpada Ch.1.V 5.

⁴Bodhicaryavatara; Ch. 6, verse 2.

⁵Bodhicaryavatara; Ch. 6, verse 3

among us. Because of this bond we all become a member of same human family. We need to focus on fundamental goal of world peace. As per the His Holiness the Dalai Lama, In Buddhism the highest spiritual ideal is to cultivate compassion for all sentient beings and to work for their welfare to the greatest possible extent. From my earliest childhood I have been conditioned to cherish this ideal and attempt to fulfill it in my every action.⁶

The Vision of the Buddhism is that the whole World and all creatures are equal and also equally important to each other. As we all are connected with each other even plants and animals or all species. So if one individual acts peacefully and tries to make aware to others how to cultivate and establish peace in our own mind; it will effect to whole world and to establish sustainable peace in the world would not be far away dream.

According to the Buddhist teaching it's very important to know the root cause of the dissatisfaction and what price we pay for what? For example, is it reasonable and wise enough to take a life of a person for the sake of a small piece of land?

As stated earlier according to the Buddhist psychology, desire and the attachment is the root cause of all the problems. Under the influence of these two we all are committing mistakes which are destroying our world in terms of peace. Delusion, greed and aggression are three poisonous element of human society we need to get rid of these three through compassion. Love and compassion is the basic requirement of world peace. This positive practice of wisdom and compassion is very useful for those who have the power to create the structure of world peace. Religion never creates boundaries for any one on the basis of color, society or nation. Any person who thinks the teachings of any religion are beneficial for all can use those teachings for their own welfare and good for others. All religion always teaches us to create a harmony in our society. Benefiting others is the basic aim of every religion.

⁶The Universe In A Single Atom, The CONVERGENCE OF SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY, p.10.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

To establish world peace is not a fantasy but we can make it real. We need to take some practical initiatives as under:

1. To adhere with non –violence and Vegetarian food choice can be an ideal binging that will be compatible with the basic teachings of Buddhism. With such practice compassion towards other living being will increase. We need to reduce the atmosphere of hatred, intolerance and violence.

2. As per the theory of the consciousness' only .everything is depend on our mind and consciousness. It does totally depend on us whether we become the part for the force of War or the force of Peace. We need to practice to enhance our mental attitude to deal with negative emotions. Practicing consistent generosity towards others is the part of the Bodhisattva path.

3. Establishment of world peace is not a simple and an easy task. we need to work tirelessly on it in a very systematic manner .To begin with an individual needs to develop peace in his own mind motivated with compassion then this practice should go to family and fellow beings. Then progressively extend it to our community, country, and the entire world. In this way only the idea of World peace can be realized.

4. Thus we need to develop a rational approach towards striking a logical balance between the material developments and spiritual advancement. This is high time to think about how to make the material progress and spiritual advancement complementary to each other.

5. We always need to keep this in our mind that different religion, ideologies; political and economy systems of the world are the tools to achieve happiness for human beings. Therefore; the idea of interdependence, communal harmony and mutual respect should be given top priority.

6. This is also high time to teach our next generation the value of world peace since their childhood. These values should be included in their academic curriculum.

Under present circumstances and conditions it is very important to change our understanding about the social responsibility. We need to change an individual through a noble mindset so that we can achieve goal of universal happiness and world peace. We need to create a national societies and an universal family so that through these societies we can build a strong notion of world peace. We need to focus on our commitment to practice the universal humanitarian values.

Now I feel it is pertinent to conclude this paper with the statement of the Nobel laureate H H The Dalai Lama as under; Because we all share this small planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature. That is not just a dream, but a necessity. We are dependent on each other in so many ways, that we can no longer live in isolated communities and ignore what is happening outside those communities, and we must share the good fortune that we enjoy.

Today we are truly a global family. What happens in one part of the world may affect us all.... As interdependents, therefore, we have no other choice than to develop what I call a sense of universal responsibility.⁷

May Peace prevail upon the entire living being.

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⁷from H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama's Nobel Lecture, December 11, 1989