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Ethical Teachings in the *Dhammapada*

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Abstract:

Etymologically, 'Dhammapada' means the righteous path, meaning a correct path for anyone seeking to lead a righteous life. Reading the whole Pāli Canon might be too difficult a task for lay people or somebody new to Buddhism. But the *Dhammapada* is such an interesting book that it contains the whole gist of Buddha's teachings in a tiny text. Consisting only of 423 verses, and full of insightful teachings on the practice leading to enlightenment, it can be considered as the compendium of an ethical way of life for any devoted follower. Verses like, "Not to do any evil deeds, to cultivate merit, to purify one's mind – this is the teaching of the Buddhas" present a quite simple definition of Buddhist teachings, but there comes the prescribed methods by the Buddha to be followed which is a gradual process of *Sila*, *Samādhi*, and *Paññā*. So it depends upon us to classify verses according to such a scheme. Fundamental matters to be understood before initiating a journey to *Nibbāna*, or preliminary requirements are mentioned, some in a whole *vagga* (chapter) and some profound doctrines just in some verses. Understanding about mind, having a good friend, a wise teacher, getting an inspiration to practice Noble Eightfold Path, knowing about good and bad destinations, proper mode of conduct, apprehending doctrinal teachings all are mentioned in the *Dhammapada* scattered in the text. So in this thesis, examining all those aspects, I will attempt to bring out the ethical teachings of the *Dhammapada*.

Keywords: ethics, morality, concentration, wisdom, gist of Dhamma, interpretation

1. Introduction

Etymologically, 'Dhammapada' means the righteous path, meaning a correct path for anyone seeking to lead a righteous life. Reading the whole Pāli Canon might be too difficult a task for lay people or somebody new to Buddhism. But the *Dhammapada* is such an interesting book that it contains the whole gist of the Buddha's teachings in a tiny text. Consisting only of 423 verses, and full of insightful teachings on the practice leading to enlightenment, it can be considered as the compendium of an ethical way of life for any devoted follower. Verses like, "Not to do any evil deeds, to cultivate what is wholesomet, to purify one's mind – this is the teaching of the Buddhas" present a quite simple definition of Buddhist teachings, but there come the prescribed methods by the Buddha to be followed which is a gradual process of *Sila*, *Samādhi*, and *Paññā*. So it depends upon us to classify verses according to such a scheme. Fundamental matters to be understood before initiating a journey to *Nibbāna*, or preliminary requirements are mentioned, some in a whole *vagga* (chapter) and some profound doctrines just in some verses. Understanding about mind, having a good friend, a wise teacher, getting an inspiration to practice Noble Eightfold Path, knowing about good and bad destinations, proper mode of conduct, apprehending doctrinal teachings all are mentioned in the *Dhammapada* scattered in the text. These constitute the ethical teachings of *Dhammapada*.

2. Ethics and Moral Philosophy

Ethics is also called moral philosophy, the rule related to what is morally *kusala* and *akusala*, right and wrong, better or worse. Ethics is often concerned with the activities of organizations and with professional codes of conduct while moral philosophy or morality is often concerned with the reasons given for approving or disapproving ways in which individuals conduct their personal, private lives, often in relation to personal financial probity, lawful conduct and acceptable standards of interpersonal behavior. In general, ethics is the study of moral problems which seeks to discover how every individual ought to act, not how every individual does in fact act or how every individual thinks every individual should act. Ethics is the rules concerned with judgments of setting up standards as follows: 'when is an action right or wrong'? what kinds of things are *kusala* or *akusala*? when does a person deserve blame, reward, or neither. Ethics can be studied from the standpoint of psychology, sociology, or anthropology which seeks to give descriptive accounts of what goes on in a society or group. The various countries have various moral codes. The term "ethics" is normally used interchangeably with "moral philosophy". Although there is a relationship between "ethics" and "moral philosophy", it is more precise to use the term "moral philosophy" in connection with the discussion pertaining to the nature of valid and invalid reasoning regarding moral issues. Human actions have a moral value which is considered in the Buddhist context as *kusala* or *akusala* (right or wrong). Ethics enquires into the standards or principles which would determine or define the morality of human actions or conduct. *Kusala* or

akusala, right or wrong, better or worse of an action is the focal point of moral philosophy. Moral philosophy establishes the standards by which human beings can measure or judge whether an action is *kusala* or *akusala*, right or wrong, better or worse. Yet, there are those who observe morality as a repressive enterprise, a set of disciplines that society, religion and parents impose on human beings to prevent them from living their life the way they want it to be lived. But, this is insignificant as far as the real intention of moral philosophy is concerned. Moral philosophy imposes certain restrictions which do not make it repressive. Human beings should be able to judge an action through each one's moral *paññā* (wisdom), without morality being imposed on them by others. Moral philosophy may be considered as a normative doctrine that provides a set of norms or standards in terms of which human beings can choose their actions. Humans as free agents can determine what norms or principles are valid and they are required to accept responsibility for their freely chosen actions.

Ethics and moral philosophy are inescapable demands in human life. They are our means of deciding a process of action. If there are no ethics and moral philosophy in our life, our actions will be arbitrary and aimless. There would be no way to work towards a purpose because there would be no way to pick and choose from a countless number of purposes. Even with an ethical norm, we cannot pursue our purposes with the chance of success. To the degree that a reasonable ethical norm is carried out, we can exactly organize our purposes and actions to attain our most important values. By applying ethics we know what we should do in some situations and what we should do as participants in the forms of activity that we engage in. Ethics, which is not limited to the acts of individuals, also pays attention to the right practices of governments, corporations, professionals and many other groups. Applying the standards to ever new and changing situations is the difficult practical task of ethics because ethical problems arise most typically in situations where there is genuine puzzlement about what should be done in different kinds of circumstances. Hence, ethics involves reasoning in light of new facts, and changing situations such as developments in technology coupled with changes in social attitudes and economic and political conditions.

For human actions to be evaluated morally as *kusala* or *akusala*, then there must be some criteria by which actions could be measured. This is what we count as the standards of morality. The standards give the reasons why a specific action is morally *kusala* or morally *akusala*. Thus, moral philosophy not only says that killing is *akusala*, but also gives the reasons why killing is *akusala*. Ethics, when considered as a philosophy, is the endeavour to attain systematic knowledge of the nature of morality. Ethicists and moral philosophers not only pay attention to the morality of human actions, they also pay attention to the reason why an action is *kusala* or *akusala*. If we engage in making moral evaluations, we have to back them up with the proper reasons. Some claim that they base themselves on feelings and emotions in making moral judgments. This is not acceptable because feelings and emotions are always one-sided and illogical, are merely products of human prejudice, social and cultural accommodation. If we want to find out the truth, we have to do our best to let our feelings and emotions be instructed by reason. It is this search for moral *paññā* that lead ethicists and moral philosophers to investigate deeply into the grounds of morality.

Ethicists and moral philosophers adopt different standards for moral evaluation. They are presented in the form of ethical theories. People who accept these theories apply or use them in making moral judgments.

Thus moral philosophy discusses reasonable grounds for making moral judgements and gives reasons in favour of or opposed to different theories proposed.

3. The Place of the *Dhammapada* in Buddhism

The *Dhammapada* is one of the well-known works in the *Sutta Piṇaka* of the *Pāli* Canon. The *Dhammapada* has been translated into English as "The Way of Truth", "Verses of Truth", "The Path of Virtue", "The Path of Wisdom", etc. The author of the *Dhammapada* is unknown. The *Dhammapada* was spoken by the Buddha including 423 verses which are very pithy and profound. Some verses contain appealing similes and some are of considerable beauty. Hence, the *Dhammapada* is the most popular work of Buddhist scriptures, with the possible exception of the *MahāsatiṭṭhānaSutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* 10 - The Discourse on Mindfulness Meditation), or *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* (*Samyutta Nikāya* LVI. 11: Setting in Motion the Wheel of the *Dhamma*).

Both *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* Schools recognize it as one of the texts containing the most fundamental teachings to be practiced by the Buddhist. Those who seek the truth can also find pleasure and usefulness when reading this book of wisdom. The *Dhammapada* occupies a prominent place in both *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna* Schools because it has so many wonderful doctrinal characteristics.

The *Dhammapada* is the most widely read Buddhist scripture in existence, which is enjoyed by both Buddhists and non-Buddhists all over the world. The Buddha's teachings in the *Dhammapada* from the earliest period of Buddhism in India propagate the philosophical and practical foundations of the Buddhist system of thought. The text presents the objectives of leading a spiritual life: attaining happiness in this life and in future life; achieving of spiritual liberation, freedom, absolute peace. The *Dhammapada* is a wonderful collection of sayings about *Majjhima-Paṭipadā* (the Middle Path), the Path of Enlightenment which leads to *Nibbāna*.

4. The Richness of the Ethical Content in the Buddha's Teachings

The Buddha's teachings contain gems of universal truth and reality representing profound ethical and philosophical thoughts. Any truth seeker, Buddhist or non-Buddhist could benefit from the teachings of the Buddha containing the light of wisdom in the world. It is seen that the Buddha's teachings are directly or indirectly related to ethical issues. The Buddha proclaimed:

"*Bhikkhus, from its origins to the present day, I only teach suffering and cessation of suffering.*"¹

¹The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, Part One: The Root fifty Discourses, 3 The Division of Similes, 22 *Alagaddūpama sutta* (The Simile of the Snake), A Translation of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, Translated from the *Pāli*, Original Translation by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, Translation edited and revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi, (Wisdom Publications Boston, Third Edition, 2005), p. 97.

On one occasion when the Buddha was dwelling at Baraṇasi in the Deer Park at Isipatana he advised the monks:

“Caratha, bhikkhave,

cārikambahujaṇahitāyabahujaṇasukhāyalokānukampāyatthāyāhitāyasukhāyadevamanussānaṃ.”²

“Wander forth, O bhikkhus, for the welfare of the multitude, for the happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of devas and humans.”³

The Buddha’s teachings above point out his earnest aspiration which is to save human beings from *dukkha*, bring *sukha* to all sentient beings. Thus, we can say that Buddhist ethics is the way of life that brings *sukha* and *santi* (peace) to all sentient beings, especially human beings. It is emphasized that this ethical way of life needs to be practiced with right effort. If Buddhist ethics is a way of life that brings *sukha* and *santi*, that way of life will dignify human beings elevating them to the supreme position, enable human beings to eliminate every *dukkha* through freeing them from *Samsāra*. Furthermore, Buddhist ethics can be said to represent the peaceful, pure and healthy way of life because only that way of life can ensure the happy life. In the *VatthaSutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya* VII), the Buddha taught:

“Bhikkhus, suppose a cloth were defiled and stained, and a dyer dipped it in some dye or other, whether blue or yellow or red or pink; it would look poorly dyed and impure in colour. Why is that? Because of the impurity of the cloth. So too, when the mind is defiled, an unhappy destination may be expected. Bhikkhus, suppose a cloth were pure and bright, and a dyer dipped it in some dye or other, whether blue or yellow or red or pink; it would look well-dyed and pure in colour. Why is that? Because of the purity of the cloth. So too, when the mind is undefiled, a happy destination may be expected.”⁴

The Buddha explained to the monks the imperfections that defile the mind namely covetousness, unrighteous greed, ill-will, anger, revenge, contempt, a domineering attitude, envy, avarice, deceit, fraud, obstinacy, presumption, conceit, arrogance, vanity and negligence. Those imperfections need to be eliminated through due respect to the Three Refuges and the receptivity and obedience of faith. If we want to achieve concentration, we must overcome *Nīvaraṇa* (Hindrances) which are considered as the defilements of mind. If we want to achieve the state of an Arahant, we must overcome three *āsavas* (cankers); ten *kilesa* (defilements); etc. The pure mind becomes established in *sukha* and *santi*; and the impure mind is overcome by *dukkha*. Purity stands for *kusala* and impurity for *akusala*. Buddhist ethics is a way of life that abandons *akusala* and cultivates *kusala*:

“Every evil never doing

and in wholesomeness increasing

and one’s heart well-purifying:

this is the Buddhas’ Teaching.”⁵

In sum, ethical content in the Buddha’s teachings represents a way of life that brings *sukha* and *santi* to human beings, dignifies the human values, abandons the *akusala* things, achieves the *kusala* things, frees from all *āsavas*. Especially, Buddhist ethics represent a way of life in which *paññā* plays an important role in leading human beings to liberation.

5. Ethical Teachings in the *Dhammapada*

The Buddha’s teachings show human beings the path to freedom from all defilements and suffering leading to mental peace and contentment and finally enlightenment. It is the path consisting of the three *Sikkhās*: ‘*sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*’. The process of liberation is compared to the development of a seed. First, the seed needs to have a good environment to start germinating and having root. When the root develops, the tree-trunk will be formed and then issue branches and leaves. The longer and firmer the root is, the bigger the tree-trunk is. As a result of this, the tree can issue buds and flowers, and finally have fruits. Therefore, the root is comparable with ‘*sīla*’; the tree-trunk is comparable with ‘*samādhi*’; the flowers are comparable with ‘*paññā*’ and the fruit comparable with *Nibbāna*.

5.1. *Sīla*

In any society of the world, laws are formulated with the aim of preventing those who have the tendency to disturb public order in order to enable people to live peacefully. These laws represent the *Sīlas* of the world which play a part in harmonious and peaceful coexistence among community members and consequently contribute to promote social growth. In any society where ethics predominates and members are conscious of their roles, there will be general security, mutual trust, and close cooperation, these in turn leading to larger progress and prosperity. Without ethics there will be corruption and disturbance, and all members of society are adversely affected. Today, most of the issues that any society experiences can be seen to be connected directly or indirectly with a lack

²Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tipitaka Series (SLTP) (n.d.-c). SN IV Māra Saṃyutta Āyu Vagga, 5. Dutiyamārapāsa sutta (in Pāli). Retrieved 14 Jul 2007 from “Mettanet – Lanka” at <http://www.metta.lk/tipitaka>, (3rd October 2015, 19:50 PM).

³The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, Part I: The Book with Verses, 4 Māra Saṃyutta Āyu Vagga, 5. Dutiyamārapāsa sutta (Mara’s Snare), A translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya, Translated from the Pāli by Bhikkhu Bodhi, (Wisdom Publications Boston, Third Edition, 2005), p. 532.

⁴*The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, Part One: The Root fifty Discourses, 1 The Division of the Discourse on the root, 7. *Vattha sutta* (The Simile of the Cloth), A translation of the Majjhima Nikāya, Translated from the Pāli, Original Translation by Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli, Translation edited and revised by Bhikkhu Bodhi, (Wisdom Publications Boston, Third Edition, 2005), p. 47.

⁵Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 183*, (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013), p. 79.

of sound ethics. The issues of right and wrong, good and evil are always concerned with ethics. *Sīlas* help us to live keeping to those ideals; they teach us to do the right things and to avoid the wrong things. Once the Buddha told Ānanda:

“*Ānanda*⁶, whatever Teaching and Discipline has been taught by me or laid down, that is your Teacher after my passing away.”⁷

The Buddhist monks and laypeople observe ‘*Sīla*’ when they follow the holy life. The Buddhist *Sīla*(s) which furnish a wholesome basis for individual and social development, are practical principles for a good life and the cultivation of virtues. If we recognize the objectives of *Sīlas* and realize their benefits, we will see that they are an integral part of the ethical life rather than seeing them as a burden that one is compelled to shoulder. The Buddhist ethical *Sīlas* which are not commandments imposed by force, are a course of training willingly undertaken so as to accomplish a desired objective. We do not practice to please a Supreme Being, but for our own benefit and the benefit of society.

In the *Aṭṭhaṅgika-Magga* (the Eightfold Path), ‘*Sīla*’ consists of *Sammā-Vācā* (Right Speech); *Sammā-Kammanta* (Right Bodily Action) and *Sammā-Ājīva* (Right Livelihood) which preclude ethically unwholesome actions of the body and speech. When we observe *Sammā-Vācā*, *Sammā-Kammanta* and *Sammā-Ājīva*, we will achieve happiness both for ourselves and for the others. This is the meaning of the word *kusala* used in the context of ‘*Sīla*’:

“Every evil never doing
and in wholesomeness increasing
and one’s heart well-purifying:
this is the Buddhas’ Teaching.”⁸

‘*Sīla*’ is the first step to reach ‘*Samādhi*’ as follows:

(1) *Sīla* is a way of escaping the grip of *Māra*. The *Dhammapada* says:

“Of those with perfect virtue⁹
who dwell in heedfulness,
freed by Final Knowledge:
Māra cannot know their path.”¹⁰

The Buddhist monks not only confront the evil personified as *Māras* but also make them difficult to access their path. *Sīlas* are able to bring a sense of peace and contentment for those who observe them:

“Right is restraint in the eye,¹¹
restraint in the ear is right,
right is restraint in the nose,
restraint in the tongue is right.”
“Right is restraint in the body,
restraint in speech is right,
right is restraint in the mind,
everywhere restraint is right.
The *bhikkhu* everywhere restrained
is from all *dukkha* free.”¹²

⁶*Teachings of the Buddha, Collection of Long Discourses of the Buddha. No. 16. Mahāparinibbāna sutta (The Discourse about the Great Emancipation)*, A translation of the Dīgha Nikāya, Translated by Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street Somerville Massachusetts 02144, 1995, p. 207.

⁷ “Yovo, ānanda, mayādharmocavinayocadesitopaññatto, so vomamaccayenasatthā.” (Source: Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tipitaka Series (SLTP) (n.d.-c). DN 16: Mahāparinibbāna sutta (in Pāli). Retrieved 14 Jul 2007 from “Mettanet – Lanka” at <http://www.metta.lk/tipitaka>)

⁸Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 183*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 79.

⁹Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 57*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 20.

¹⁰ “Tesamsampannasīlānaṃ
appamādavihāriṇaṃ
sammadaññāvimuttānaṃ
Māromaggamnavindati.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 57, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 275).

¹¹Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 360-361*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 143.

¹² “Cakkhunāsaṃvarosādhu
sādhusotenasamvaro
ghānenasamvarosādhu
sādhujivhāyasamvaro.”
“Kāyenasamvarosādhu

(2). In the *Sāmaññaphala sutta* (DN 2), the Buddha taught how to guard the sense-doors:

“How does a monk become a guardian of the sense-door? Here a monk, on seeing a visible object with the eye, does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics. Because greed and sorrow, evil unskilled states, would overwhelm him if he dwelt leaving this eye-faculty unguarded, so he practices guarding it, he protects the eye-faculty, develops restraint of the eye-faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear...; on smelling an odour with the nose...; on tasting a flavour with the tongue...; on feeling an object with the body...; on thinking a thought with the mind, he does not grasp at its major signs or secondary characteristics, he develops restraint of the mind-faculty. He experiences within himself the blameless bliss that comes from maintaining this Ariyan guarding of the faculties.”¹³

(3). The virtue of contentment: It is considered as a way to cut through the net of passions and desires, attain a peaceful state of body and mind and accomplish the supreme goal.

(4). Four ways: contemplating the body in the body; contemplating feelings in feelings; contemplating the mind in the mind and contemplating *dhammas* in *dhammas*, as taught by the Buddha in the *Mahāsatiṭṭhāna sutta* (DN 22). In this *sutta* the Buddha taught:

“This is a one-way path¹⁴, monks, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of grief and lamentation, for the extinction of pain and sorrow, for attaining the right way, for the direct realisation of Nibbāna, that is to say, the four ways of attending to mindfulness.”¹⁵

‘*Sīlas*’ for the laypeople are *pañcasīlas* (five precepts) which enjoin against killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, false speech, and use of intoxicating drink or drugs. Observance of *pañca sīla* contributes to promote peaceful coexistence, mutual trust, a cooperative spirit, and general peace and harmony in society. It also plays a part in maintaining an atmosphere which is conducive to social progress and development, as we can see from the practical implications of each ‘*Sīla*’. No killing means to admonish against the destruction of life which is based on the principle of goodwill and respect for the right to life of all living beings. By observing this ‘*Sīla*’, we learn to cultivate *mettā* (loving-kindness) and *karuṇā*. We should see the others’ *dukkha* as ours and endeavor to do what we can to alleviate their suffering. Cultivation of *mettā* and *karuṇā* has personal benefits as well as benefits to society, due to the development of an altruistic spirit for the welfare of others. According to the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha taught:

“All tremble at force,¹⁶
dear is life to all.
Liking others to oneself
kill not nor cause to kill.”¹⁷

No stealing involves respect for others right to possess wealth and property. By observing this *sīla*, one restrains from earning one’s livelihood through wrongful means, such as by stealing or cheating:

“Who in the world will never take¹⁸

sādhuvācāyaṣaṃvaro
manasāsaṃvarosādhū
sādhusabbatthasaṃvaro
sabbatthasaṃvuto bhikkhu
sabbadukkhāpamuccati.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 360-361, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 1425 – 1429).

¹³ *Teachings of the Buddha, Collection of Long Discourses of the Buddha. No. 2. Sāmaññaphala sutta (The Fruits of Recluseship)*, A translation of the Dīgha Nikāya, Translated by Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street Somerville Massachusetts 02144, 1995, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Teachings of the Buddha, Collection of Long Discourses of the Buddha. No. 22. Mahāsatiṭṭhāna sutta (The Long Discourse about the Ways of Attending to Mindfulness)*, A translation of the Dīgha Nikāya, Translated by Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street Somerville Massachusetts 02144, 1995, p. 193.

¹⁵ Ekāyanoayaṃ, bhikkhave, maggosattānaṃvisuddhiyā,
sokaparidevānaṃsamatikkamāyadukkhadomanassaṇaṃmatthaṅgamāyañāyassaadhiḡamāyanibbānassasacchikiriyāya,
yadidaṃcattārosatiṭṭhānā.” (Source: Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tipitaka Series (SLTP) (n.d.-c). DN 22: Mahāsatiṭṭhāna sutta (in Pāli). Retrieved 14 Jul 2007 from “Mettanet – Lanka” at <http://www.metta.lk/tipitaka>).

¹⁶ Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 130*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 55.

¹⁷ “Sabbetasantidaṇḍassa
sabbesaṃjīvitṭpiyaṃ
attānaṃupamaṃkatvā
nahaneyyanaghātage.”
(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 130, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 562).

¹⁸ Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 409*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 353.

*what is not given, long or short,
the great or small, the fair or foul,
that one I call a Brahmin True.”¹⁹*

Sexual misconduct consists of rape, adultery, sexual promiscuity, paraphilia, and all forms of sexual aberration. This *sīla* teaches us to respect one’s own spouse as well as those of others, and encourages the practice of self-restraint, which is of utmost importance in spiritual training. According to the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha taught:

*“Four things befall that heedless one²⁰
sleeping with one who’s wed:
demerit gained but not good sleep,
third is blame while fourth is hell.”²¹*

No lying is an important factor in social life and dealings. It is related to respect for truth which is a strong deterrent to inclinations or temptation to commit wrongful actions, while disregard for the same will only serve to encourage evil things:

*“With one denying truth there goes to hell²²
that one who having done says “I did not”.
Both of them are making kammās base
are equal after death.”²³*

No drinking enjoins against the use of intoxicants. For personal, abstention from intoxicants has a part to play in maintaining sobriety and a sense of responsibility. It contributes to prevent traffic accidents in the modern social context, -that can easily happen because of the influence of intoxicating drinks or drugs:

*“Or has distilled, fermented drinks:²⁴
Who with abandon follows these
extirpates the root of self
even here in this very world.”²⁵*

From this ethical way of life, the Buddhist monks and the laypeople become happy. From this, their body and mind are deeply calmed. This is called the process of cultivation ‘*Sīla*’ that conduces to ‘*Samādhi*’. For Buddhism, ‘*Sīla*’ is the first step of the path of ‘Three *Sikkhās*’, is the ethical principle as well as the first virtue of the Buddhist monks and laypeople, and especially brings the light of wisdom to those who observe it:

“Who by wholesome kamma²⁶

¹⁹ “Yo’ dhadīghaṃvarassaṃvā
aṇuṃthūlaṃsubhāsūbhāṃ
lokeadinnaṃnā’diyati
tam ahaṃbrūmibrāhmaṇaṃ.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 409, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 1602).

²⁰Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 309*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 125.

²¹ “Cattāriṭhānāninaropamatto
āpajjati paradārūpasevī
apuññalābhaṃnanikāmaṣeṣyaṃ
nindaṃtatīyaṃnirayaṃcatutthaṃ.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 309, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 1245).

²²Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 306*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 125.

²³ “Abhūtavādīnirayaṃupeti
yovāpikatvānakaromiticā’ha
ubho’pītepeccasamābhavanti
nīhīnakamaāmanujāparattha.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 306, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 1235).

²⁴Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 247*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 102.

²⁵ “Surāmerayaṃpānaca
yonaroanuyūñjati
idh’ evaṃesolokasmim
mūlaṃkhaṇatiattano.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 247, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 1020).

*covers up the evil done
illuminates all this world
as moon when free from clouds.*"²⁷

5.2. Samādhi

Once 'Sīla' has been perfected, our words and actions will become stable leading to a peaceful mind. This is called the process of 'Samādhi'. The practitioner who observes *Sīlas*, resorts to the foot of a tree or an empty house to sit cross-legged, with upright back establishing right mindfulness, contemplating mindfulness of body in order to eliminate 'nīvaraṇa': 1. *kāmacchanda* (sensuous desire), 2. *byāpāda* (ill-will), 3. *thīna-middha* (sloth and torpor), 4. *uddhacca-kukkucca* (restlessness and scruples), and 5. *vicikicchā* (skeptical doubt); and achieving *vitakka* (reflection), *vicāra* (investigation), *pīti* (joy), *sukha* (happiness) and *cittassaekaggata* (contemplation of mind). Therefore, the goal of Samādhi is to purify 'nīvaraṇa' which taint one's mind and lead to upsetting the existing artificially constructed framework once and for all and in remodeling it on an entirely new basis. The older frame is called 'ignorance' and the new one 'enlightenment'. It is evident that no products of our relative consciousness or intelligence faculty can play any part in *Samādhi*. We practice *Samādhi* for mind-training and self-discipline by looking within ourselves. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha taught:

*"Though one should live a hundred years²⁸
foolish, uncontrolled,
yet better is life for a single day
moral and meditative."
"Though one should live a hundred years
foolish, uncontrolled,
yet better is life for a single day
wise and meditative."*²⁹

To practice *Samādhi* is to try to understand the nature of the mind and to use it effectively in daily life. The mind is the key to *sukha* (happiness), and also the key to *dukkha* (suffering). The daily practice of *Samādhi* will help one to free the mind from bondage to any mental fetters or defilements, as well as distractions in daily life. So it is very important to regularly restrain our mind:

*"Drifting far, straying all alone,³⁰
formless, recumbent in a cave.
They will be free from Mara's bonds
who do restrain this mind."*³¹

Due to restraining our mind, we achieve abundant bliss:

²⁶Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 173*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 73.

²⁷ "Yassapāpaṃkatapaṃkammaṃ
kusalenapithiyati
so imaṃlokaṃpabhāseti
abbhāmutto' vacandimā."

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 173, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 733).

²⁸Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 110 - 111*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 43.

²⁹ "Yocavassasataṃjīve
dussīloasamāhito
ekā'haṃjīvitapaṃseyyo
sīlavantassajhāyino."
"Yocavassasataṃjīve
duppaññoasamāhito
ekā'haṃjīvitapaṃseyyo
paññāvantassajhāyino."

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 110 - 111, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 482 – 486).

³⁰Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 37*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 14.

³¹ "Dūraṅgamaṃekacaraṃ
asarīraṃguāsayaṃ
ye cittaṃsaññāmessanti
mokkhantiMārabandhanā."

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 37, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 198).

*“Do not indulge in heedlessness!³²
Do not come near to sexual joys!
The heedful and contemplative
attains abundant bliss.”³³*

When one restrains the mind, one’s wisdom would grow to reach enlightenment. This is the most direct way to reach Nibbāna:

*“They meditate persistently,³⁴
constantly they firmly strive,
the steadfast to Nibbana reach,
the Unexcelled Secure from bonds.”³⁵*

Samādhi is the way of peace and the way of leaving the passions and delusions of life – *Nibbāna*. When one practices *Samādhi*, one progresses towards liberation depending on one’s level of cultivating from low to high; from the unrefined to the refined. This is the process of the continuous clarity of awareness in order to achieve a cultivated state of mind. Therefore, *Samādhi* is the spiritual practice which is very essential for practitioners so as to eliminate afflictions by responding or facing up to and controlling them. Due to *Samādhi*, we always know clearly and pay attention to the actions of body and speech. To have a good ethical foundation, one should guard and cultivate the mind carefully. The Buddha taught us to practice *Samādhi* and restrain heedlessness as follows:

*“The wise then, recognizing this³⁶
as the distinction of heedfulness,
pleased with the spheres of Nobles Ones,
in heedfulness rejoice.”
“They meditate persistently,
Constantly, they firmly strive,
the steadfast to Nibbana reach,
the Unexcelled Secure from bonds.”³⁷*

In our daily life, we have to cope with a great deal of circumstances which make our mind always change. Only in one second or one minute, there are thousands of different thoughts that struggle to arise in our mind. But the worst thoughts are *akusala* such as *lobha*, *dosa*, *moha*, desires, jealousy, etc., that result in a perverted state of mind. According to the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha taught:

“One of unsteady mind,³⁸

³²Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 27*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 10.

³³“Māpamādamanuyūñjetha
mākāmaratisanthavaṃ
appamatto hi jhāyanto
pappotivipulamsukhaṃ.”
(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 27, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 159)

³⁴Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 23*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 9.

³⁵“Tejhāyinosāatikā
niccaṃdalhaparklamā
phusantidhīrānibbāṇaṃ
yogakkhemaṃanuttaraṃ.”
(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 23, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, P. 142)

³⁶Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 22-23*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 9.

³⁷“Etaṃvisesatoñātvā
appamādamhipaṇḍitā
appamādepamodanti
ariyānaṃgocararātā.”
“Tejhāyinosāatikā
niccaṃdalhaparakkamā
phusantidhīrānibbāṇaṃ
yogakkhemaṃanuttaraṃ.”
(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 22-23, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 141-143).

³⁸Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 38*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 14.

who doesn't know True Dhamma,
who is of wavering confidence
wisdom fails to win.”³⁹

Human life is not only controlled by the thoughts in consciousness like *lobha*, *dosa*, *moha* but also by the activities of unconsciousness. For instance, when sleeping, we dream of experiences of fearful events.

If we want to conquer and control our mind, *Samādhi* will be the best way to achieve it. Hence, one pays attention to one subject until one's mind can have ability to be still and not be stirred by any thoughts or external distractions. When one's mind is concentrated, it becomes a source of incomparable power:

“The mind is very hard to see⁴⁰
and find, it falls on what it wants.
One who's wise should guard the mind,
a guarded mind brings happiness.”⁴¹

It is believed that in the Buddha's time, the *Arahants* had psychic power because of their ability to attain perfect *Samādhi*. It is the source of incomparable power that will eliminate all defilements leading the mind to attain peace and contentment, and finally freedom from *Samsāra*:

“For whom pollutions are destroyed,⁴²
not attached to any food,
he has as range the nameless and
the void of perfect freedom too.
As birds that wing through space,
hard to trace his going.”⁴³

5.3. Paññā

Although *Samādhi* has an incomparable strength, Buddhism only applies it for developing *Paññā*. The common knowledge about the world is not wisdom according to Buddhism. Although scholars, doctors, lawyers, scientists, etc., possess great learning, they are still controlled by *lobha*, *dosa*, *moha* and other defilements. It is *avijjā* (ignorance) that leads them to *Samsāra*. Their knowledge is only an external cover, whereas *paññā* in Buddhism is a lucid knowledge which arises from inner human nature. So, those who have *paññā* in the sense in which it is understood in Buddhism are not influenced by mundane affairs while they live in this world.

Samādhi, serves as the basis for the arising of *Paññā* conducive to perception of the truth leading to enlightenment. For Buddhism, *Paññā* is considered as the final step on the way of freeing our false notion of *attā* (self) enabling us to attain understanding of *anattā* (non-self) which is *Nibbāna*. The practice of ‘Three *Sikkhās*’ is carried out fast or slowly depending on the ability and will of the practitioners. If they do their best to practice this process, the result will be perfect. They apply *Paññā* to contemplate on the ‘three characteristics’: *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anattā* (non-self) of all things:

“When with wisdom one discerns⁴⁴

³⁹ “Anavattḥitacittassa
saddhammaṃavijānato
pariplavapasādassa
paññānaparipurati.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 38, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 201).

⁴⁰Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 36*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 14.

⁴¹ “Suddasamsunipunaṃ
yatthakāmanipātinaṃ
cittaṃrakkhethamedhāvī
cittaṃguttaṃsukhāvahaṃ.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 36, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 194).

⁴²Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 93*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 37.

⁴³ “Yassā'savāparikkhīṇā
Āhārecaanissito
Suññatoanimittoca
Vimokkhoyassagocarō
Ākāse'vasakuntānaṃ
padaṃtassadurannayaṃ.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 93, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 418.)

*transience of conditioned things
one wearily from dukkha turns
treading the Path to purity.”*
“When with wisdom one discerns
the dukkha of conditioned things
one wearily from dukkha turns
treading the Path to purity.”
“When with wisdom one discerns
all knowables are not a self
one wearily from dukkha turns
treading the Path to purity.”⁴⁵

In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha describes the characteristic of the fool to help us distinguish what kind of person does not have *Paññā*:

“When evil kamma's immature⁴⁶
the fool thinks it is honeyed,
but when the evil has matured
then to the fool comes dukkha.”
“As milk, is evil kamma done,
so slowly does it sour.
Smouldering does it follow the fool
like fire with ashes covered.”⁴⁷

Due to such characteristics of the fool, the Buddha advises us not to make friend with the fool:

“If a wayfarer fails to find⁴⁸
one better or equal,
steadfast he should fare alone
for a fool's no fellowship.”
“Better it is to live alone
for with a fool's no fellowship,
no evil do, be free of care,

⁴⁴Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 277, 278, 279*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 112 – 113.

⁴⁵ “Sabbesañkhārāniccā'ti
yadāpaññāyapassati
athanibbindatidukkhe
esamaggovisuddhiyā.”
“Sabbesañkhārādukkhā'ti
yadāpaññāyapassati
athanibbindatidukkhe
esamaggovisuddhiyā.”
“Sabbesañkhārānattā'ti
yadāpaññāyapassati
athanibbindatidukkhe
esamaggovisuddhiyā.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 277, 278, 279, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 1127, 1129, 1131)

⁴⁶Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 69, 71*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 26.

⁴⁷ “Madhu'vamaññatibālo
yāvapāpamnapaccati
yadācapaccatīpāpam
athabālodukkhamnigacchati.”
“Na hi pāpamkatamkammam
Sajjukhīram'vamuccati
dahantambālanveti
bhasmacchanno'vapāvako.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 69, 71, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 324, 332).

⁴⁸Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 61, 330*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 25, 132.

fare as lone elephant in the wilds."⁴⁹

The final goal of Buddhism is to attain enlightenment through *Paññā*. The content of *Paññā* is the whole teaching that the Buddha expounded in forty-five years centered in the four noble truths and dependent arising (the Theory of Causation). Therefore, *Paññā* provides a firm grasp about suffering as a necessary attribute of sentient existence; about the accumulation of suffering as caused by passions (cause of suffering); about extinction of passion (leading to happiness); and about the path leading to the extinction of passion (basis of happiness). *Paññā* is also a true view of human life and the universe. *Paññā* never examines all things through *indriya* (the senses). *Paññā* has a view of all things through practicing the Buddha's teachings concerning *sammā-samādhi* (right concentration) and *sammā-diṭṭhi* (right view). According to the Dhammapada:

*"One of unsteady mind,
who doesn't know True Dhamma,
who is of wavering confidence
wisdom fails to win."*⁵⁰

According to *Saṅgīti sutta* (D 33), Venerable Sāriputta taught that *Paññā* is of three kinds:

*"Three kinds of knowledge⁵¹: - knowledge that is learned (from another), knowledge that is thought out, knowledge that is gained by [cultivation] development."*⁵²

(1). *Suta-mayā-paññā* (knowledge based on learning): is that knowledge which someone has heard from others and hence achieved through learning.

(2). *Cintā-mayā-paññā* (knowledge based on thinking): is that knowledge which someone has achieved through one's own thinking, about what one has learned from others.

(3). *Bhāvanā-mayā-paññā* (knowledge based on mental development): is that knowledge which someone has achieved through mental development in this or that way, and which has reached the stage of full concentration.

The *Dhammapada* says:

*"Conceiving the real in unreality⁵³
while seeing unreal the truly real,
roaming fields of thoughts ill-formed:
never they at the real arrive."
"That which is real they know as real,
that unreal, to be unreal;
roaming fields of thought well-formed
they at the real arrive."*⁵⁴

⁴⁹ "Carañcenādhigaccheyya
seyyaṃsadisamattano
ekacariyaṃdaḥamkayirā
natthibālesahāyatā."

"Ekassacaritaṃseyyo
Natthibālesahāyatā
Eko care nacapāpānikayirā
Apposukkomātaṅ'araññe'vanāgo."

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 61, 330, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 291, 1321).

⁵⁰Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 38*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 14.

⁵¹*Teachings of the Buddha, Collection of Long Discourses of the Buddha. No. 33. Saṅgīti sutta (The Recital)*, A translation of the Dīgha Nikāya, Translated by Nāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street Somerville Massachusetts 02144, 1995, p. 345.

⁵²"Tīnipuñ-ñakiri-ya-vatthūni—dānamayāpuñ-ñakiri-ya-vatthu, sīlamayāpuñ-ñakiri-ya-vatthu, bhāvanāmayāpuñ-ñakiri-ya-vatthu." (Source: Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tipitaka Series (SLTP) (n.d.-c). DN 33: Saṅgīti sutta (in Pāli). Retrieved 14 Jul 2007 from "Mettanet – Lanka" at <http://www.metta.lk/tipitaka>)

⁵³Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism's Most Beloved Text – No. 11&12*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 2.

⁵⁴"Asāresāramatino
sārecāsāradassino
tesāraṃnādhigacchanti
micchāsāṅkappagocarā."
"Sārañcasāratōñatvā
asāraṃcaasārato
tesāraṃadhigacchanti
sammāsāṅkappagocarā."

Due to *Samādhi*, one can attain *Bhāvanā-mayā-paññā* through direct experiential realization beyond the scope of pure reason. *Bhāvanā* (mental development) produces states of *Samādhi* which consist of the indispensable foundation and precondition of insight by purifying the mind from the five mental defilements or *nīvaraṇa* (hindrances), whilst *vipassanā* (insight) produces the four supramundane stages of holiness and deliverance of mind. In the *Samādhi sutta* (SN 22.5), The Buddha taught:

“*Bhikkhus, develop concentration*⁵⁵. *A bhikkhu who is concentrated understands things as they really are. And what does he understand as it really is? The origin and passing away of form; the origin and passing away of feeling; the origin and passing away of perception; the origin and passing away of volitional formations; the origin and passing away of consciousness.*”⁵⁶

In the *Milindapañha*, the Buddha’s teaching regarding insight is explained as follows:

“*Just as when a lighted lamp is brought into a dark chamber, the lamp-light will destroy the darkness and produce and spread the light, just so will insight, once arisen, destroy the darkness of ignorance and produce the light of knowledge.*”⁵⁷

Bhāvanā-mayā-paññā forms one of the three kinds of *puñña-kiriya-vatthu* (meritorious action); *bhāvanā-rāmatā* (delight in meditation) is one of *ariya-vaṃsa* (the noble usages). This kind of *paññā* is mentioned and praised so much by the Buddha:

“*Though one should live a hundred years*⁵⁸

lazy, of little effort,

yet better is life for a single day

strongly making effort.”

“*Though one should live a hundred years*

not seeing Dhamma Supreme,

yet better is life for a single day

seeing Dhamma Supreme.”⁵⁹

So, *anāsava-paññā* (wisdom without leakage) is different from the mundane types of wisdom or knowledge because it is conducive to liberation.

In sum, Three Sikkhās (*sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*) help us to overcome the bondage to all defilements and are means to assist us not to fall into ‘the three realms’: *kāma-dhātu* (the desire realm), *rūpa-dhātu* (the form realm), and *ārūpa-dhātu* (the formless realm). Based on the foregoing analysis we can say that *samādhi* arises from *sīla*, and *paññā* arises from *samādhi*. *Sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* have a dialectical relationship. The *Dhammapada* says:

“*As splendid horse touched with whip,*⁶⁰

be ardent, deeply moved,

by faith and virtue, effort too,

by meditation, Dhamma's search,

by knowledge, kindness, mindfulness;

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 11&12, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 97, 102).

⁵⁵ *Teachings of the Buddha, Collection of Connected Discourses of the Buddha, No. 22.5. Samādhi sutta (Concentration)*, A translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya, Translated by Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom Publications, 199 Elm Street Somerville Massachusetts 02144, 2005, p. 856.

⁵⁶ “*Samādhim, bhikkhave, bhāvētha; samāhito, bhikkhave, bhikkhu yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. Kiñcayathābhūtaṃ pajānāti? Rūpassasamudayañcaatthaṅgamañca, vedanāyasamudayañcaatthaṅgamañca, saññāyasamudayañcaatthaṅgamañca, saṅkhārāṇaṃ samudayañcaatthaṅgamañca, viññāṇassamudayañcaatthaṅgamañca.*” (Source: Sri Lanka Buddha Jayanti Tipitaka Series (SLTP) (n.d.-c). SN 22.5: *Samādhi sutta* (in Pāli). Retrieved 14 Jul 2007 from “Mettanet – Lanka” at <http://www.metta.lk/tipitaka>).

⁵⁷ *Teachings of the Buddha, Collection of Short Discourses of the Buddha, Itivuttaka, No. 3.3.6: Vedagūpañha (Is there a One Who Knows?)*, A translation of the Khuddaka Nikāya, Translated by Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, (Source: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org>).

⁵⁸ Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 112 & 115*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 43, 44.

⁵⁹ “*Yocavassasatamjīve
Kusītohīnaviriyo
ekāhaṃjīvitamseyyo
viriyamārabhatodalham.*”
“*Yocavassasatam jive
apassamdhammamuttamam
ekā’hamjīvitamseyyo
passatodhammamuttamam.*”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 112 & 115, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 490, 502)

⁶⁰ Peter Feldmeier, *Dhammapada – The Way of Truth, A Fresh Translation and Commentary on Buddhism’s Most Beloved Text – No. 144*, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 2013, p. 56.

*abandon dukkha limitless!*⁶¹

6. Conclusion

According to the *Theravāda* Buddhist tradition, the *Dhammapada* is the best known and most widely esteemed text in the *Pāli Tipiṭaka* and the most sacred scripture of Buddhism. The teachings in the *Dhammapada* contain ethical standards which have boundless value for humanity. The simple but verses pregnant with ethical meaning in the *Dhammapada* serve as the teachings of a sympathetic counselor for the genuine seeker of ethical values. Its direct teachings inspire humbleness and reflexion; for the committed seeker. It is a trustworthy source of inspiration and practical instruction. The verses in the *Dhammapada* describe very deeply about practical spirituality and they are guidelines to right living. The Buddha clearly pointed out that whoever cultivates the *Dhamma* earnestly will enjoy the happiness of liberation.

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⁶¹ “Assoyathābhadrokaśāniviṭṭho
ātāpinosaṃveginobhavātha
saddhāyasīlenacavīriyenaca
samādhinādhammavinicchayenaca
sampannavijjācaraṇāpatissatā
jahissathadukkhamidamaṇappakaṃ.”

(Source: Ven. WeragodaSaradaMaha Thero, TREASURY OF TRUTH ILLUSTRATED DHAMMAPADA- No. 144, ISBN, 981-00-4938-2, p. 617).

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