

§ 1. *The Buddha claimed no place for Himself in His own Dhamma*

1. Christ claimed to be the Prophet of Christianity.
2. He further claimed that he was the Son of God.
3. Christ also laid down the condition that there was no salvation for a person unless he accepted that Christ was the Son of God.

4. Thus Christ secured a place for Himself by making the salvation of the Christian depend upon his acceptance of Christ as the Prophet and Son of God.

5. Mohammad, the Prophet of Islam, claimed that he was a Prophet sent by God.

6. He further claimed that no one could get salvation unless he accepted two other conditions.

7. A seeker of salvation in Islam must accept that Mohammad is the Prophet of God.

8. A seeker after salvation in Islam must further accept that he is the last prophet.

9. Salvation in Islam is thus ensured only to those who accept these two conditions.

10. Mohammad thus secured a place for Himself by making the salvation of the Muslim depend upon his acknowledgment of Mohammad as the Prophet of God.

11. No such condition was ever made by the Buddha.

12. He claimed that he was no more than the natural son of Suddhodana and Mahamaya.

13. He carved for himself no place in his religion by laying down any such conditions regarding himself for salvation as Jesus and Mahommad did.

14. That is the reason why we are left to know so little about himself even though abundant material was available.

15. As is known, the first Buddhist congregation





was held soon after the death of the Buddha at Rajagraha.

16. Kassyappa presided over the congregation. Anand, Upali and many others who belonged to Kapilavatsu and who wandered with him wherever he went and were with him till his death were present.

17. But what did Kassyappa the President do ?

18. He asked Anand to repeat the Dhamma and put the question to the congregation, "Is this right?" They answered in the affirmative. And Kassyappa then closed the question.

19. Thereafter he asked Upali to repeat the Vinaya and put the question to the congregation, "Is this right?" They answered in the affirmative. Kassyappa then closed the question.

20. Kassyappa then should have put the third question to someone present in the congregation to record some important incidents in the life of the Buddha.

21. But Kassyappa did not. These were the only two questions with which he thought the Sangh was concerned.

22. If Kassyappa had collected the record of the Buddha's life we would have had today a full-fledged biography of the Buddha.

23. Why did it not strike Kassyappa to collect the record about the Buddha's life?

24. It could not be indifference. The only answer one can give is that the Buddha had carved no niche for himself in his religion.

25. The Buddha and his religion were quite apart.

26. Another illustration of the Buddha keeping himself out of his religion is to be found in his refusal to appoint a successor.

27. Twice or thrice the Buddha was requested by his followers to appoint a successor.

28. Every time the Buddha refused.

29. His answer was, "The Dhamma must be its own successor.

30. "Principle must live by itself, and not by the authority of man.

31. "If principle needs the authority of man it is no principle.

32. "If every time it becomes necessary to invoke the name of the founder to enforce the authority of Dhamma then it is no Dhamma."

33. Such was the view he took of his own position regarding his Dhamma.



III

§ 2. *The Buddha did not promise to give Salvation. He said He was Marga Data (Way Finder) and not Moksho Data (Giver of Salvation)*

1. Most religions are described as revelations. But the Buddha's religion is not a revelation.

2. A revealed religion is so called because it is a message of God to His creatures to worship their maker (i.e., God) and to save their souls.

3. Often the message is sent through a chosen individual who is called a prophet to whom the message is revealed and who reveals it to the people. It is then called Religion.

4. The obligation of the prophet is to ensure salvation to the faithful.

5. Salvation of the faithful means the saving of their souls, from being sent to hell provided they obey God's commands and recognize the prophet as his messenger.

6. The Buddha never claimed that he was a prophet or a messenger of God. He repudiated any such description.

7. A more important point than this is that his religion is a discovery. As such it must be sharply distinguished from a religion which is called Revelation.

8. His religion is a discovery in the sense that it is the result of inquiry and investigation into the conditions of human life on earth and understanding of the working of human instincts with which man is



born, the moulding of his instincts and dispositions which man has formed as a result of history and tradition and which are working to his detriment.

9. All prophets have promised salvation. The Buddha is the one teacher who did not make any such promise. He made a sharp distinction between a *moksha data* and a *marga data*, one who gives salvation and one who only shows the way.

10. He was only a *marga data*. Salvation must be sought by each for himself by his own effort.

11. He made this very clear to the Brahmin Moggallana in the following Sutta.

12. "Once the Exalted One was staying at Shravasti, in the East Park, at the storeyed house of Migara's mother.

13. "Then, the Brahmin Moggallana, the accountant, came to the Exalted One and gave him friendly greeting and after the exchange of courtesies sat down at one side. So seated, the Brahmin Moggallana, the accountant, said this to the Exalted One :

14. " 'Just as, Master Gautama, one gets a gradual view of this storeyed house, a progress, a graduated path, and so on right up to the last step of the stairs, just so is the progressive training of us Brahmins : that is to say, in our course of study in the Vedas.'

15. " 'Just as in a course of archery, Gautama, with us the Brahmins, the training, the progress, the approach is step by step ; for instance, in counting.'

16. " 'When we take a private pupil we make him count thus: 'One one, twice two, thrice three, four times four, and so on up to a hundred.' Now is it possible, Master Gautama, for you to point to a similar progressive training on the part of your followers in your Dhamma.'

17. " 'It is so, Brahmin. Take the case, Brahmin, of a clever horse-trainer. He takes a thoroughbred in hand, gives him his first lesson with bit and bridle, and then proceeds to the further course.'

18. " 'Just so, Brahmin, the Tathagata takes in hand a man who is to be trained and gives him his

first lesson, thus : ‘ Come thou, brother ! Be virtuous. Abide, constrained by the restraint of the obligation.’

19. “ ‘Become versed in the practice of right behaviour ; seeing danger in trifling faults, do you undertake the training and be a pupil in the moralities.’

20. “ ‘As soon as he has mastered all that, the Tathagata gives him his second lesson, thus : ‘ Come thou brother ! Seeing an object with the eye, be not charmed by its general appearance or its details.’

21. “ ‘Persist in the restraint of that dejection that comes from craving, caused by the sense of sight uncontrolled, these ill states, which would overwhelm one like a flood. Guard the sense of sight, win control over the sense of sight.’

22. “ ‘ And so do with the other organs of sense. When you hear a sound with the ear, or smell a scent with the nose, taste a taste with the tongue, or with body touch things tangible, and when with mind you are conscious of a thing, be not charmed with its general appearance or its details.’

23. “ ‘ As soon as he has mastered all that, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson, thus : ‘ Come thou, brother ! Be moderate in eating ; earnest and heedful do you take your food, not for sport not for indulgence, not for adding personal charm or comeliness to body, but do it for body’s stabilising, for its support, for protection from harm, and for keeping up the practice of the righteous life, with this thought ; ‘I check my former feeling. To no new feeling will I give rise, that maintenance and comfort may be mine.’

24. “ ‘ Then, Brahmin, when he has won restraint in food, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson thus : ‘ Come thou, brother ! Abide given to watchfulness. By day, when walking or sitting, cleanse your heart from things that may hinder you. By night spend the first watch walking up and down or sitting and do likewise. By night in the second watch, lie down on the right side in the posture of a lion, and placing one foot upon the other, mindful and self-possessed, set your thoughts on the idea of exertion. Then in the





III

third watch of the night rise up, and walking up and down, or sitting, cleanse the heart of things that may hinder.'

25. "Then, Brahmin, when the brother is devoted to watchfulness, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson, thus : 'Come thou, brother ! Be possessed of mindfulness and self-control. In going forth or going back, have yourself under control. In looking forward or looking back, in bending or relaxing, in wearing robes or carrying robe and bowl, in eating, chewing, tasting, in easing yourself, in going, standing, sitting, lying, sleeping or waking, in speaking or keeping silence have yourself under control.'

26. "Then Brahmin, when he is possessed of self-control, the Tathagata gives him a further lesson thus : 'Come thou, brother ! Seek out a secluded lodging, a forest or root of a tree, a mountain or a cave or a mountain grotto, a charnel field, a forest retreat, the open air, a heap of straw.' And he does so. And when he has eaten his food he sits down cross-legged, and keeping his body straight up, he proceeds to practise the four ecstasies.'

27. "Now, Brahmin, for all brothers who are pupils, who have not yet attained mastery of mind, who abide aspiring, for such is the manner of my training.'

28. "But as to those brethren who are arhants, who have destroyed the asavas, who have lived the life, done their task, laid down the burden, won their own salvation, utterly destroyed the fetters of becoming, and are released by the perfect insight, for such as those these things are conducive to ease in the present life and to mindful self-control as well.'

29. "When this was said, the Brahmin Moggallana, the accountant, said to the Exalted One :

30. "But tell me, Master Gautama. Do the disciples of the worthy Gautama,—do all of them win the absolute perfection which is Nibbana : or do some fail thus to attain ?

31. "Some of my disciples, Brahmin, thus advised and trained by me, do so attain. Others do not."



32. “But what is the reason, Master Gautama ? What is the cause, Master Gautama ? Here we have Nibbana. Here we have the Path to Nibbana. Here we have the worthy Gautama as instructor. What is the reason, I say, why some disciples thus advised and trained do attain, while others do not attain ?”

33. “That, Brahmin, is a question that I will answer. But first do you answer me this, so far as you think fit. Now how say you, Brahmin—Are you well skilled in the road to Rajagraha ?”

34. “I am, master, ‘ Skilled indeed am I in the road to Rajagraha !”

35. “Well, thus instructed, thus advised, he takes the wrong road, and off he goes with his face set to the west.

36. “Then a second man comes up with the same request and you give him the same instructions. He follows your advice and comes safe to Rajagraha.

37. “‘That is my business ?”

38. “‘What do I in the matter, Brahmin ? The Tathagata is one who only shows the way.’ ”

39. Here is a full statement that he does not promise salvation. He only shows the way.

40. Besides what is salvation ?

41. With Mohammad and Jesus salvation means saving the soul from being sent to hell by the intercession of the Prophet.

42. With Buddha salvation means Nibbana and Nibbana means control of passions.

43. What promise of salvation can there be in such a Dhamma ?

**§ 3. *The Buddha did not Claim any
Divinity for himself or for his Dhamma.
It was discovered by man for man.
It was not a Revelation***

1. Every founder of religion has either claimed divinity for himself or for his teachings.

2. Moses, although he did not claim for himself



III

any divine origin, did claim divine origin for his teachings. He told his followers that if they wished to reach the land of milk and honey they must accept the teachings because they were the teachings of Jehovah the God.

3. Jesus claimed divinity for himself. He claimed that he was the Son of God. Naturally His teachings acquired a divine origin.

4. Krishna said that he was God himself and the Gita was his own word.

5. The Buddha made no such claim either for himself or his Sasana.

6. He claimed that he was one of the many human beings and his message to the people was the message of man to man.

7. He never claimed infallibility for his message.

8. The only claim he made was that his message was the only true way to salvation as he understood it.

9. It was based on universal human experience of life in the world.

10. He said that it was open to anyone to question it, test it and find what truth it contained.

11. No founder has so fully thrown open his religion to such a challenge.

PART II

Different views of the Buddha's Dhamma

1. What others have understood Him to have Taught.
2. The Buddha's Own Classification.

§ 1. *What others have understood Him to have Taught*



1. "What are the teachings of the Buddha?"
2. This is a question on which no two followers of the Buddha or the students of Buddhism agree.
3. To some Samadhi is his principal teaching.
4. To some it is Vipassana (a kind of Pranayam).
5. To some Buddhism is esoteric. To others it is exoteric.
6. To some it is a system of barren metaphysics.
7. To some it is sheer mysticism.
8. To some it is a selfish abstraction from the world.
9. To some it is a systematic repression of every impulse and emotion of the heart.
10. Many other views regarding Buddhism could be collected.
11. This divergence of views is astonishing.
12. Some of these views are those of men who have a fancy for certain things. Such are those who regard that the essence of Buddhism lies in Samadhi or Vipassana, or Esoterism.
13. The other views are the results of the fact that the majority of the writers on Buddhism are students of ancient Indian history. Their study of Buddhism is incidental and occasional.
14. Some of them are not students of Buddhism.
15. They are not even students of anthropology, the subject matter which deals with the origin and growth of religion.
16. The question that arises is—"Did the Buddha have no Social Message?"
17. When pressed for an answer, students of Buddhism refer to the two points. They say—
18. "The Buddha taught Ahimsa."
19. "The Buddha taught peace!"
20. Asked—"Did the Buddha give any other Social Message?"
21. "Did the Buddha teach justice?"
22. "Did the Buddha teach love?"



III

23. “Did the Buddha teach liberty?”

24. “Did the Buddha teach equality?”

25. “Did the Buddha teach fraternity?”

26. “Could the Buddha answer Karl Marx?”

27. These questions are hardly ever raised in discussing the Buddha’s Dhamma.

28. My answer is that the Buddha has a Social Message. He answers all these questions. But they have been buried by modern authors.

§ 2. *The Buddha’s Own Classification*

1. The Buddha adopted a different classification of Dhamma.

2. The first category he called Dhamma.

3. He created a new category called Not-Dhamma (Adhamma) though it went by the name of Dhamma.

4. He created a third category which he called Saddhamma.

5. The third category was another name for Philosophy of Dhamma.

6. To understand His Dhamma one must understand all the three—Dhamma, Adhamma and Saddhamma.

PART III

What is Dhamma ?

1. To Maintain Purity of Life is Dhamma.
2. To Reach Perfection in Life is Dhamma.
3. To Live in Nibbana is Dhamma.
4. To Give up Craving is Dhamma.
5. To believe that all compound things are impermanent is Dhamma.
6. To believe that Karma is the instrument of Moral Order is Dhamma.

§ 1. To Maintain Purity of Life is Dhamma



1. "There are these three forms of purity... And of what sort is purity of body ?

2. "Herein a certain *one* abstains from taking life, from stealing, from sinful living. This is called 'purity of body.'

3. "And of what sort is purity of speech ?

4. "Herein a certain one abstains from falsehood. . .

5. "And of what sort is purity of mind ?

6. "Herein a monk, if he have some personal sensual desire, is aware : ' There is in me sensual desire.' If there be none he is likewise aware of it. Also he is aware of how the arising of sensual desire not yet arisen comes about, and how it is abandoned when it has arisen, and how in the future there is no such arising.

7. "If he have some personal malevolence, he is aware ; ' There is within me malevolence.' Also he is aware of the arising . . . and the abandoning thereof, and of how in future there is no recurrence thereof.

8. "If he have some personal sloth-and-torpor . . . excitement and flurry . . . if he have some personal doubt-and-wavering, he is aware of the fact. Also of how (each of these) arises, is abandoned and recurs not again in future. This is called ' purity of mind.'

9. "He who is pure in body, speech, and mind,"

"Sinless and clean and blessed with purity,—"

" 'Sin-washer' is the name men give to him."

(ii)

1. "There are three forms of purity . . . Purity of body, purity of speech, purity of mind."

2. "And of what sort is purity of body ?"

3. "Herein a certain one abstains from taking life, from stealing from *wrong* practice in sensual lusts. This is called 'purity of body'."



III

4. "And of what sort is purity of speech?"

5. "Herein a certain one abstains from falsehood . . . from idle babble. This is called 'purity of speech.' "

6. "And of what sort is purity of mind?"

7. "Herein a certain one is not covetous or malevolent of heart and has right view. This is called 'purity of mind.' These are the three forms of purity."

(iii)

1. There are these five weaknesses, which are a source of weakness to training. What five?

2. Taking life ; taking what is not given ; lustful, evil practices ; lying ; and indulging in spirituous liquors, which cause idleness.

3. These are the five causes which lead to failure.

4. When these five sources of weakness to training are put away, four arisings of mindfulness should be made to become.

5. Herein a monk abides contemplating the body as body, strenuous, mindful and self-possessed, having overcome both the hankering and discontent common in the world.

6. He abides contemplating the feelings as feelings . . .

7. He abides contemplating the mind as mind . . .

8. He abides contemplating ideas as ideas, strenuous, mindful and self-possessed, having overcome both the hankering and discontent common in the world.

9. When these five sources of weakness to training are put away, these four arisings of mindfulness should be made to become.

(iv)

1. There are these three failures. Failure in morals, failure in mind, failure in view.

2. And of what sort is failure in morals ? A certain one takes life, steals, is a wrong-doer in sensual desires, a liar, a slanderer, of bitter speech, an idle babbler. This is called "failure in morals."

3. And of what sort is failure in mind ?

4. A certain one is covetous and malevolent of heart. This is called "failure in mind."

5. And of what sort is failure in view ?

6. Herein a certain one holds the depraved, the perverse view that there is no (virtue in) almsgiving, in sacrifice, in offerings : that there is no fruit, no result of good and evil deeds: that this world is not, that there is no world beyond: that there is no mother, no father, no beings of spontaneous birth : that in the world are no recluses and Brahmins who have won the summit, who have won perfection, who of themselves by their own intuitional powers have realized the world beyond and can proclaim it. This, monks, is called "failure in view."

7. Monks, it is due to failure in morals, failure in mind and in view that beings, when body breaks up after death, are reborn in the Waste, the Way of Woe, in the Downfall, in Purgatory. Such are the three failures.

8. Monks, there are these three successes. What three ? Success in morals, success in mind, success in view.

9. Now of what sort is success in morals ?

10. A certain one abstains from taking life and the rest . . . from bitter speech and idle babbling. This is called "success in morals."

11. And of what sort is success in mind ?

12. Herein a certain one is not covetous or malevolent of heart. This is called "success in mind."

13. And of what sort is success in view ?

14. Herein a certain one has right view: he holds with certainty that there is (virtue in) almsgiving, in sacrifice, in offerings: that there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds: that this world is, that there is a world beyond : that mother, father and beings of spontaneous birth do exist: that in the world there are recluses and Brahmins who have realized the world beyond and can proclaim it. This, monks, is called "success in view."

15. It is owing to success in these three things



III



III

that beings, when body breaks up after death, are reborn in the Happy Lot, in the Heaven World. Such, monks, are the three successes.

§ 2. *To Reach Perfection in Life is Dhamma*

1. There are these three perfections.
2. Perfection in body, speech and mind.
3. And of what sort is perfection in mind ?

4. By the destruction of the asavas, realizing in this very life himself, knowing it thoroughly—the heart's release, the release by insight which is free from the asavas, having attained it abides therein. This is called "perfection in mind." These are the three bodily perfections.

5. There are other perfections. The Buddha explained them to Subhuti.

6. SUBHUTI : What is a Bodhisattva's perfection of giving ?

7. THE LORD : Here a Bodhisattva, his thoughts associated with the knowledge of all modes, gives gifts, i.e., inward or outward things, and, having made them common to all beings, he dedicates them to supreme enlightenment ; and also others he instigates thereto. But there is nowhere an apprehension of anything.

8. SUBHUTI : What is a Bodhisattva's perfection of morality ?

9. THE LORD : He himself lives under the obligation of the ten ways of wholesome acting, and also others he instigates thereto.

10. SUBHUTI : What is a Bodhisattva's perfection of patience ?

11. THE LORD : He himself becomes one who has achieved patience, and others also he instigates to patience.

12. SUBHUTI : What is a Bodhisattva's perfection of vigour ?

13. THE LORD : He dwells persistently in the five perfections, and also others he instigates to do likewise.

14. SUBHUTI : What is the Bodhisattva's perfection of concentration (or meditation) ?

15. THE LORD : He himself, through skill in means, enters into the trances, yet he is not reborn in the corresponding heavens of form as he could ; and others also he instigates to do likewise.

16. SUBHUTI : What is a Bodhisattva's perfection of wisdom ?

17. THE LORD : He does not settle down in any dharma, he contemplates the essential original nature of all dharmas ; and others also he instigates to the contemplation of all dharmas.

18. It is Dhamma to cultivate these perfections.

§ 3. To Live in Nibbana is Dhamma

1. "Nothing can give real happiness as Nibbana." So said the Buddha.

2. Of all the doctrines taught by the Buddha the doctrine of Nibbana is the most central one.

3. What is Nibbana ? Nibbana as taught by the Buddha has a totally different meaning and content than what has been given to it by his predecessors.

4. By Nibbana they meant the salvation of the soul.

5. Thus there were four ways in which Nibbana was conceived of: (1) Laukik (material, eat, drink and be merry type) ; (2) Yogic ; (3) Brahmanic and (4) Upanishadic.

6. There was one common feature of the Brahmanic and Upanishadic conceptions of Nibbana. They involved the recognition of a soul as an independent entity—a theory which the Buddha had denied. The Buddha had therefore no difficulty in rejecting the Brahmanic and Upanishadic teaching of Nibbana.

7. The Laukik conception of Nibbana was too materialistic to appeal to the Buddha. It meant nothing but the satisfaction of man's animal appetites. There was nothing spiritual in it.

8. To accept such a conception of Nibbana the





III

Buddha felt was a gross wrong that can be done to a human being.

9. For the satisfaction of appetites can result only in creating more appetites. Such a way of life could bring no happiness, he thought. On the contrary, such happiness was sure to bring more unhappiness.

10. The Yogic conception of Nibbana was a purely temporary state. The happiness it brought was negative. It involved disassociation from the world. It avoided pain but gave no happiness. Whatever happiness it may be said to bring lasted as long as the yoga lasted. It was not permanent. It was temporary.

11. The Buddha's conception of Nibbana is quite different from that of his predecessors.

12. There are three ideas which underlie his conception of Nibbana.

13. Of these the happiness of a sentient being as distinct from the salvation of the soul is one.

14. The second idea is the happiness of the sentient being in *Samsara* while he is alive. But the idea of a soul and the salvation of the soul after death are absolutely foreign to the Buddha's conception of Nibbana.

15. The third idea which underlies his conception of Nibbana is the exercise of control over the flames of the passions which are always on fire.

16. That the passions are like burning fire was the text of a sermon which the Buddha delivered to the Bhikkus when he was staying in Gaya. This is what he said :

17. "All things, O Bhikkus, are on fire. And what, O Priests, are all these things which are on fire ?

18. "The eye, O Bhikkus, is on fire ; forms are on fire ; eye-consciousness is on fire ; impressions received by the eye are on fire ; and whatever sensation, pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impression received by the type, that also is on fire."

19. "And with what are these on fire?"