



## ĀJĪVAṬṬHAMAKA SĪLA IN BUDDHIST ETHICS

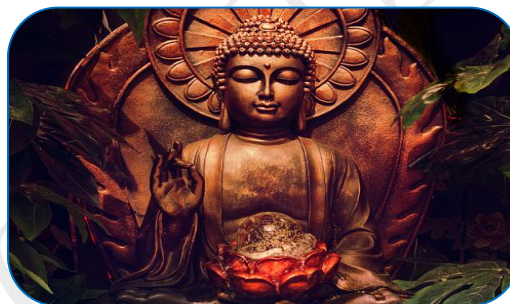
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### ABSTRACT :

*This research paper is explaining to the Buddhist ethics in the way of Ājivaṭṭhamaka Sīla. Buddhism holds, as the way of liberation from suffering, the middle way which is called Majjhima paṭipadā and also it is the gateway to the Buddhists' final aspiration (i.e. nibbāna). This way, according to Dhammacakkapavattana sutta, consists of the Noble Eightfold Path such as right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. These are divided into three groups as morality, concentration and wisdom. Morality group (sīlakkhandha) comprises right speech, right action and right livelihood. Concentration group (samādhikkhandha) comprises right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Wisdom group (paññākkhandha) comprises right view and right thought. Of these, the three constituents of the morality group become Ājivaṭṭhamaka sīla. It is also called Sucarita sīla in Buddhism. Sucarita sīla is the methods to more the stage in higher level.*



**KEYWORDS :** noble eightfold path, ājivaṭṭhamaka sīla, morality, concentration, wisdom.

### INTRODUCTION:

The Buddha preached to living beings for 45 years in accordance with their wishes. In Buddhism, thus, there are many kinds of doctrines like scattered flowers under tree. In Buddhist Council, the greatest disciples of the Buddha putted those doctrines into three baskets, having collection alike doctrines. Therefore there are three baskets in Buddhism as such discourses (sutta), disciplines (vinaya) and practical theory (abhidhamma). These are called Tipiṭaka. But, in brief, there are only three stages of the way to practise leading to the cessation of craving (nibbāna). The first stage consists in the practice of morality or virtue (sīla). The second stage consists in the practice of concentration (samādhi) or Jhāna. And the third stage consists in the practice of realization or wisdom (paññā). Among these, morality or moral precept or virtue (sīla) is foundation of all practices. That is why one cannot attain Jhāna without morality and also cannot attain enlightenment (paññā or nibbāna) without Jhāna. Jhāna (dhyāna) means concentration of mind on meditation; awareness of pure lucidity of mind and equanimity of heart.

In Buddhism, the concept of sīla is very important for human beings. Therefore the leaders of every religion taught to keep sīla. That is why sīla is to observe disciplines and refrain from all evils. A person who is full of sīla never behave badly to hurt other living beings. He or she also feels peaceful in mind and then there becomes peaceful in his or her environment. Hence the Buddha said that sīla is the first stage and foundation of all practices. Thus it should arise the following question to have a proper

understanding of what is sīla, in what sense something is called sīla and how many kinds of sīla are there.

### The Concept of Sila

In Buddhism, there are varieties of meaning of sīla. It is translated "virtue, morality, precept and behavior" in Buddhist ethics. In the Visuddhimagga, the word sīla is defined as follows: "there is virtue as volition, virtue as consciousness-concomitant, virtue as restrain, virtue as transgression." The word sīla literally means nature, character, behavior, habit, etc., in general. It plays a distinctive role. And it is a mode of mind and volition (cetanā sīlaṃ), abstention is virtue (saṃvaro sīlaṃ), non-transgression is virtue (avītikkamo sīlaṃ), with the meaning of abandoning it is abstention (pahānatṭhena saṃvaro) and the moral activities (sabbe kusalā dhammā) manifested in verbal or physical or mental action.

Sīla is the twofold volition due to which one keeps oneself restrained from immoral deeds such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, etc., and also due to which one fulfils one's duties assigned to one with full devotion and sincerity. In this context, sīla has been said to be fourfold namely, volition is sīla, psychic factors are sīla, restraint is sīla, and non-transgression is sīla.

The concept of sīla denotes good conduct, moral practice or code of morality. In Buddhist ethics, there are many kind of sīla as Pañca sīla, Aṭṭha sīla, Nava sīla, Dasa sīla, Pātimokkha saṃvara sīla, Indriyasamvara sīla and Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla etc. Sīla, especially Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla is regarded as the foundation of Buddhist way of living. This is not known like Pañca sīla (five precepts) but it is very beneficial for people who are practising insight meditation and also their societies. Therefore, in order to be peaceful society and in mind, everybody should observe disciplines of it.

Today the world is full of the harmful things on account of the irritation, dissatisfaction, disharmony, subjugation, famine, the poor, needs, wars and social problems, (dukkhas) etc. That is reason nowadays many people who are avaricious are trading in wrong livelihood and then there is not equal economic in each environment, society and country around the world. Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla is the refraining from wrong livelihood including unwholesome actions. It is also, thus, the foundation of peace for the world.

### The Concepts of Ājīvaṭṭhamaka Sīla

Buddha's lifetime, early Buddhists kept profoundly only Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla. That is why it corresponds to the morality group of the Noble Eightfold Path. Of these, refraining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct are called Right Action (sammā kammanta); refraining from lying, slandering, rude or harsh speech and vain talk or foolish babble are called Right Speech (sammā vācā); refraining from wrong livelihood (micchāājīva) is called Right Livelihood (sammāājīva). The three constituents of the morality group, when considered in detail, become Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla.

Venerable Buddhaghosa, therefore, defined that Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla means "the Eight Precepts with Right Livelihood as the Eighth". And then he revealed that Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla consists of eight numbers of discipline.

But many Pāli scholars do not accept about this definition. They think that Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla is connected with livelihood (ājīva). One who needs to trade, first, must think about business mentally how to do and then he or she will perform works physically or verbally. Therefore right livelihood (sammāājīva) consists of the three mental wholesome actions such as absence of covetousness, goodwill and right view. In Tipiṭaka, we can see many suttas which the Buddha preached that one who performs ten types of evil conduct including taking intoxicants will be reborn in four realms of misery after death but one who keeps sīla will be reborn in heaven and also can attain enlightenment.

Therefore, refraining from ten types of evil conduct is called Sucarita sīla (good conduct morality). Besides that, it is also called Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla when refraining from them including taking intoxicants regarding livelihood.

### Ājīvaṭṭhamaka Sīla of Buddhaghosa

In Buddhism, mainly there are of two kind: the Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla of Buddhaghosa and Catubhumika Nikāya. According to Buddhaghosa, Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla consists of eight numbers of discipline as follows:

1. Refraining from killing living beings.
2. Refraining from taking stealing other's property.
3. Refraining from indulging in sexual misconduct.
4. Refraining from telling lies.
5. Refraining from slandering.
6. Refraining from rude or harsh speech.
7. Refraining from vain talk` or foolish babble, and
8. Refraining from wrong livelihood.

### Ājīvaṭṭhamaka Sīla of Catubhumika Nikāya

In Myanmar, there are nine sects (nikāyas) about Theravāda Buddhism after Sixth Buddhist Council. Of these, the Buddhists of Catubhumika Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Hngetwin Nikāya keep merely Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla which refrains from all evil conducts including taking intoxicants as follows:

1. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from killing living beings.
2. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from stealing other's property.
3. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from indulging in sexual misconduct.
4. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from telling lies.
5. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from slandering.
6. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from rude or harsh speech.
7. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from vain talk` or foolish babble.
8. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from covetousness.
9. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from ill-will.
10. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from wrong view.
11. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from wrong livelihood.
12. I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking intoxicants.

### CONCLUSION

Sīla is based on Hīri and Ottappa. Hīri means moral shame to do evils and Ottappa means moral fear to do evils. These two are called "Guarding Principles of the World" (lokapāla dhamma) because these are the refraining from immoral actions.

Actually, according to Buddhist Abhidhamma, all living beings are called Sattva but they are separated by their moral or immoral deeds that who are high or low beings. Human beings are kept with moral discipline (sīla) by those two, Hīri and Ottappa and also are distinguished from animals. If, therefore, human beings never be ashamed and fear to do evils, they will sink into evil depths and then they will be reduced to the state of animals. After that, they will perform bullying like animals. If so, there will never become peaceful in the world.

Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla is separate from other sīlas. That is why it is based on equal opportunity of living beings, having control of avarice on trade. One who observes Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla, automatically, is ashamed and fear to trade with avarice. Therefore he or she feels peaceful in mind and also there becomes peaceful in the world because of him or her. Soon or later, he or she will attain enlightenment (nibbāna). That is why his or her mind is very pure without defilements. It is the final goal of Buddhists.

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