

## **Refuge in Myanmar Buddhism: A comparative study**

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### **ABSTRACT**

World, though they flow through different waterways, but have one and the same destination. The religious leaders all over the world have a major role in national as well as international combination for bringing peace on earth. Religion in any form is a potent factor for peace. A world without religion will be an inflexible place to live in. It is religion that keeps in chain the brute in man. The role and contribution of religion to the world is for peace. The various religions of the world are **agreed with** the opinion of harmony among religions and benevolence among men. All religions have one and the same goal, like different rivers going in the same sea. Most of people cannot escape form tradition, custom and cannot try to be free from ritual derive from traditionally through past generations. All religions are founded by religious leaders, aiming at creating peace that everyone much wants. Buddha taught with full consideration to have generous spirit on different religions. No religions taught his followers any violence.

**Key Words :** Buddhist tradition, Attitude of Buddhist, Real refuge, Religion

### **INTRODUCTION**

Culture, idea and religion are important facts and foundation of development and steady of one country and one nation. Without superficial mind on the religion, it must be serious consideration or weighty conviction. The each leader of all religions teaches their followers and beings in the world to be clever and cultural. No God encouraged and supported to destroy this world. The real religion shows and guides the people to create better world and the religious men and women too love and put kindness on each one. There is a motto “every man has religious believe “therefore, since appearing human in this world, men sleeked religious beliefs. From the era of dawn of the history, until these present days, everybody has political beliefs, spiritual beliefs and various beliefs in numerous fields. There is no one who has belief about religion and everyone has belief on religion. How much higher education a man has, he believes in religion without thinking and his knowledge on the religion is youthful. Most of today’s people used to accept religious belief with no consideration but what a scientist says, they accept only after examination. Everyone should prefers the religion to the science. Some are free thinkers and they have no any belief on creed and stay outside of circle of religion. We can say that it is also a kind of religion. Everybody can’t help losing in touching with religion.

**Buddhist traditions :**

The traditions and customs have either irrespective of sex or any religion according to their way and faith. It is nature that everyone is searching for depend for their achievement such as, good health, happiness and being well in business as well as the persons who have none such as success, economy, mental peace are searching for great expectations under the powerful God. It means that the person, who has already perfected with everything, wants more and more, and the person who has lacked properties, tries to get what he needs. Everyone has different thoughts, opinion and vision. People's desire and longing are not same with each other. Apart from that, everybody cannot be the same as each one because of their past karma. So they differ from one's outcome and behavior in accordance with the Karma did in their past life. Although Myanmar people are Buddhists (in 85%) and very religious devotees, they are also subject to prefer to traditions and customs of ancestors. They can't be free form In these days, we can see those who belief in the deities, dragons, animals and magical power or possessor of science and those who are paying respects to (Taung pyone Nyi Naung called) devas (young and elder brother Devas). The both upper and lower people in Myanmar came to Taung Pyone village and greatly celebrate deity festival. Such taking refuge is not Buddhist way. Everyone is seeking for taking refuge for their wishes in various ways. The purpose of searching for taking refuge is to be danger less and to perfect what they want in their daily life. Especially taking refuge is because of the craving and ignorance. For their reliance, they go to mountains, caves and big trees to fulfill wishes, to be happy and good health for their family membership and themselves and make obeisance to powerful Devas.<sup>3</sup> in Buddhism; there are so many seasonable festivals in relation to religious ceremony. Myanmar people celebrate pagoda festivals once a year at famous pagodas such as Shwe Da Gon, MaHaMuNi, Pyi Shwe San Daw pagodas etc . . . . Indeed, Buddha does not support doing so and He encourages and teaches His follower to practice Dharma only.

**Attitude of Buddhists :**

Buddhists are subject to give in charity generously their properties to the needy, by doing so; they used to believe that they will have good results in return at next life. Buddhist people accept Karma, So they donate many things and thousands of money to the poor. In particular, they understand well that all things are impermanent or will not last, and cannot control. Everything will disappear someday according to Buddha's teachings.

Buddhists accept and agree that there is the past life and future life or reincarnation and so they do good conduct and action while they are alive." If one acts or speaks with a pure mind, then, happiness follows him, like a shadow never going away" Buddha taught in Dhammapada. So Buddhists incline toward offering and that is why Myanmar is the most generous country in the world, even though Myanmar is materially deprived. And also they regard that human's life span is very short and is full of suffering. Human's life is struggling and not stable day after day; so they keep Buddha's Dharma in heart and live peacefully according to Buddha's way of life. They share loving-kindness and have the greatest respect for each other keeping good heart in mind. Buddhists have no discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, or sexual orientation and regard that all beings in the world are same and no difference between them. Buddhists are in favor of mental development than material development

**Beginning of religion :**

Human beings are always facing man-made natural disasters such as unpleasant events,

accidents, floods, fire that perished many people or caused a lot of damages, and then people became afraid of all dangers in various forms come to them and felt unhappiness and disappointment. Since then, both primitive human beings and today's human beings started searching for refuge. Although we couldn't say correctly the time started religion, it can say that all religions begin because of fear and unsatisfied.

Awareness of religion probably began at the time of higher Paleolithic revolution about 50000 years ago. Religion is deeply regarded by people that it is very important one in the history of mankind and nobody can have any safety without religion or refuge. It is not really true; indeed, being dominated by fear, the Paleolithic men presume that a supernatural power sends dangers and sufferings to them. The Paleolithic people were unfamiliar with natural law such as storm, thundering, rumbling, over flood happened due to natural disaster etc... They become afraid of nature and started searching for refuge. There are two ways in search of religions; depending on wisdom and on faith. The Buddhism doesn't depend on faith but depends on wisdom can distinguish what is wrong and what is right. It means that one must accept one's refuge by intelligence experienced by one. Mere faith cannot see real truth and it is just first step of the path to walk on it. If only a single wisdom is not enough to go to one's destination. Faith and wisdom must be balance at our daily life and too much wisdom is a kind of imperfection and too much faith is a kind of imperfection. Perhaps the one who has a lot of faith is lacking in wisdom and the one who has a lot of wisdom is lacking in faith. Therefore the faculty of Faith should be balanced with that of wisdom. Some persons extremely believe in the powerful God without thinking anything and consequently they commit greatest evil such killing people, slaughtering innocent civilians. Besides hanging weapons such as bombs on their body and assassinated and killed other people because of religious believe. It is that extreme believes is liable to appear extremists. The extremism stems from horrible events, killing of a large number of people badly in a cruel way.

### **Refuge in Buddhist Perspective :**

Real refuge is oneself and no need to seek outside. In accordance with Buddha's guide, our refuge is in our body. Once upon a time, After venerable Sariputtara, Buddha's disciple-arhat who sits on the right flank of the Buddha, passed away, Venerable Ananda, who serviced the Buddha, felt worry about passing away of Ven sariputtara, then, Buddha asked him, did Sariputtara take your morality, concentration and wisdom together with him (sariputtara) ? Ananda replied, No sir, he didn't take my morality, concentration and wisdom together with him,. Buddha said, if so, why did you feel so much? Ananda, you don't take refuge in individual person. There were no permanent things in the world. Everybody will die someday. Only Dharma will be your refuge and savior. Don't seek other refuge in outside. Only Dharma will lead you to Nirvana, liberated from sufferings.

### **Conclusion :**

As a Buddhist, the reason to take refuge in Buddha, is knowing real truth taught by Buddha: what is wholesome and what is unwholesome? Appearing the Buddha in the world is to give Dharma talk or Dharma intelligence and to show only way: what is wrong way and what is right way. There is no more than. Taking refuge in Dharma is to practice and follow practically Dharma discovered by Buddha. Dharma is like medicine instructed by the doctor for a patient And If the patient takes medicine according to the doctor's advice, his disease will be relieved slow and quick, if not so, and his illness will not be recovered. Here it is noticed that the Buddha and Dharma mean the Doctor and medicine respectively. Dharma taught by Buddha is not only for Buddhists or His

followers but also for living beings over the world. So dharma is like medicine. The effective medicine is vital importance for a patient. After recovering from his disease, there is no need to check and know from where this medicine comes? From whom comes medicine? Who produces this medicine? Etc... Especially it is to recover one's illness. Moreover, to take refuge in Sanghas (Buddhist monks) are to donate offerings that one has food, robe, medicine and dwelling because Sanghas too practice and live under religious life in accordance with dharma vinaya( disciplines) laid down by Buddha (227 precepts in brief, over 9000,0000000 precepts in enlarge) So Sanghas are like a good paddy- field in which rice is grown by farmers. Here it is understood that Samghas are like paddy-fields And Things to be offered are like paddies and crops. Supposing; you have a field but you don't grow paddy and crop in it. You don't use the paddy-field and neglect it. Then how will you get good crop and paddy without growing in this paddy-field? That is why we Buddhists take refuge in Sangha also to offer four requisites. What is more, after Lord Buddha passed away, Sangha maintained tri pitaka well taught by Buddha, without losing as well as shared it throughout the world till today.

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