



The Concept of Morality (*sīla*) in Buddhism

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**Abstract**

Background: Virtue (*sīla*) is the fundamental foundation for achieving *Nirvana* in Buddhism. It is a set of moral conduct which is essential for the holistic life of an individual, a small unit of an ideal society. *sīla* also is a very essential factor for bringing transformation in the human societies. Practices of virtue (*sīla*) opens the door for *Samadhi* and *Panna* respectively.

Objective: This article explores the method of mental purification by means of Virtue, the code of ethical behavior.

Methodology: Expository or Descriptive approach is applied while writing this paper.

Result: *sīla* includes refraining from killing, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, slandering, harsh speech, talking nonsense, covetousness, malevolence and wrong view, which are regarded as unwholesome deeds. A thorough observance of *sīla* leads one to peace, prosperity, social reputation and happiness in this life. It also helps a person to have a tranquil exit from the world. It is directed to bodily, mental and verbal purity.

Conclusion: The benefits of practicing *sīla*, including ethical well-being, a favorable rebirth, and ultimate liberation, are discussed in the article. Besides, the article also emphasizes on *sīla* being safeguard to human being opening all golden gates leading one to spiritual progress or ultimate goal of human being i.e. enlightenment.

Keywords: *sīla*, Purification, *Nibbāna*, *Visuddhimagga*, Rebirth

Paper Type: Research Paper

Introduction to Morality (*sīla*)

Sīla in Buddhism, is translated into English as morality, virtue, good behaviour, attitude etc. (Dhamma Sāmi, *sīla*) and I prefer to use in this article, the term morality as I think, it conveys the sense well. The *pariyatti-sāsana* (the study of the scriptures), the *patipatti-sāsana* (the practice of *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*: morality, concentration and insight) and the *pativedha-sāsana* (the attainments of the paths and fruits of awakening) are regarded as the threefold *Buddha-sāsana*. The study of the scriptures is the base for the practice of morality, concentration and insight. In the same way the practice of morality, concentration and insight is the cause for the attainment of the paths and fruits of awakening. As long as the *patipatti-sāsana* (the practice of *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*: morality, concentration and insight) exists in this world other two *sāsanas* will also be existed. So the morality (*sīla*) which is based on the *patipatti-sāsana* is very much important constituent.

The base of the *patipatti-sāsana* is *Vinaya* (corpus of discipline) as it is mentioned ‘*vinayo nāma sāsana* *āyu* (*Vinayavinicchaya* *īkā*, VRI 1.17) [the Buddhist *Vinaya* (corpus of discipline) is the life of the order] in the *Samantapāsādikā*, the commentary to *Vinaya Piṭaka*. The corpus of discipline causes the self-restraint, which prevents one from performing unskillful actions. So the *Vinaya* (corpus of discipline) could be regarded as the synonym for the *sīla* (morality).

It is very important to realize that what *sīla* (morality) is. In the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* *pāli* the *sīla* (morality) is described as the volition, the consciousness-concomitant, the restraint and the non-transgression of one who is refraining from killing, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, lying, slandering, harsh speech, talking nonsense, covetousness, malevolence and wrong view, which are regarded as unwholesome deeds and of one who fulfills the practice of duties (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 38).¹

In the *Visuddhimagga* (The Path of Purification) the *sīla* (morality) is described as follows.

What is virtue² ? It is the states beginning with volition present in one who abstains from killing living things, etc., or in one who fulfils the practice of the duties. For this is said in the *Paṭisambhidā*: “What is virtue? There is virtue as volition, virtue as consciousness-concomitant, virtue as restraint, virtue as nontransgression” (Paṭis I 44). Herein, virtue as volition is the volition present in one who abstains from killing living things, etc., or in one who fulfils the practice of the duties. Virtue as consciousnessconcomitant is the abstinence in one who abstains from killing living things, and so on. Furthermore, virtue as volition is the seven volitions [that accompany the first seven] of the [ten] courses of action (kamma) in one who abandons the killing of living things, and so on. Virtue as consciousness-concomitant is the [three remaining] states consisting of non-covetousness, non-ill will, and right view, stated in the way beginning, “Abandoning covetousness, he dwells with a mind free from covetousness” (D I 71). Virtue as restraint should be understood here as restraint in five ways: restraint by the rules of the community (*pātimokkha*), restraint by mindfulness, restraint by knowledge, restraint by patience, and restraint by energy (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.6; Ñānamoli 10-11).³

1 *Kim sīlanti cetanā sīlam, cetasikam sīlam, samvaro sīlam, avūttikamo sīlam..... Pāṇātipātam samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Adinnādānam samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Kāmesumicchācāram samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Musāvādam samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Pisuṇam vācam [pisuṇāvācam (syā. ka.) dī. ni. 1.9 passitabbā] samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Pharusam vācam [pharusavācam (syā. ka.)] samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam, Samphappalāpam samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Abhijjham samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Byāpādam samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. Micchādīṭṭhim samvaraṭṭhena sīlam, avūttikkamaṭṭhena sīlam. (2. Sīlamayañānaniddeso, Paṭisambhidāmagga* *pāli*, Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD, VRI 38)

2 The writer has used term ‘virtue’ instead of morality and, as this is the quotation, the same term is retained here.

3 *Kim sīlanti pāṇātipātādīhi vā viramantassa vattapaṭipattim vā pūrentassa cetanādayo dhammā. Vuttañhetam paṭisambhidāyam “kim sīlanti cetanā sīlam, cetasikam sīlam, samvaro sīlam, avūttikamo sīla”nti (paṭi. ma. 1.39). Tatha cetanā*

Furthermore in the same text, these fivefold restraints are described in detail. “Restraint by the *Pātimokkha*” (*pātimokkhasaṃvaro*) is described as one who is furnished and fully furnished, with this *Pātimokkha* restraint. Guarding the eye faculty, entering upon restraint of the eye faculty is regarded as “restraint by mindfulness” (*satisaṃvaro*). “Restraint by knowledge” (*ñānasamvaro*) is that stemming the currents in the world that flow, by means of mindfulness; and restraint of currents by understanding. Bearing cold and heat etc. is regarded as the “restraint by patience” (*khantisamvaro*). Non-endurance of a thought of sense desires when it arises is called “restraint by energy” (*vīriyasamvaroti*) (Ñānamoli 10-11). Including the fivefold restraint, the abstinence, in clansmen who dread evil, from any chance of transgression met with, should all be understood to be “morality as restraint.” Morality as non-transgression is the non-transgression, by body or speech, of precepts of morality that have been undertaken (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.7).⁴

The Meaning of Morality (*sīla*)

It is very much important to know that in what sense the term *sīla* (morality) is used in the Pali canonical literature. Again in the *Visuddhimagga* (The Path of Purification) the morality (*sīla*) is described in the sense of composing (*sīlana*). The composing is either a coordinating (*samādhāna*), meaning non-inconsistency of bodily action, etc., due to virtuousness; or it is an upholding (*upadhāraṇa*), meaning a state of basis (*ādhāra*) owing to its serving as foundation for profitable states. For those who understand etymology admit only these two meanings. Others, however, comment on the meaning here in the way beginning. The meaning of morality (*sīla*) is the meaning of head (*sira*), the meaning of morality is the meaning of cool (*sītala*) (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.7).⁵

The characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*) of morality is composing (*sīlana*) even when analyzed in various ways, just as visibility is of visible data even when analyzed in various ways. Just as visible-ness is the characteristic of the visible-data base even when analyzed into the various categories of blue, yellow, etc., because even when analyzed into these categories it does not exceed visible-ness, so also this same composing, described above as the coordinating of bodily action, etc., and as the foundation of profitable states, is the characteristic of morality even when analyzed into the various categories of volition, etc., because even when analyzed into these categories it does not exceed the state of coordination and foundation.

Action to stop misconduct and achievement as the quality of blamelessness in virtuous men, are functions (*rasa*) of morality. So what is called morality should be understood to have the function (nature) of stopping misconduct as its function (nature) in the sense of action, and a blameless function (nature) as its function (nature) in the sense of achievement. For under [these headings of] characteristic, etc., it is action (*kicca*) or it is achievement (*sampatti*) that is called “function” (*rasa*—nature).

The morality is manifested (*paccupaṭṭhāna*) as the kinds of purity i.e. bodily purity, verbal purity, mental purity. It is manifested, comes to be apprehended, as a pure state. But conscience and shame

sīlaṃ nāma pāṇātipātādāhi vā viramantassa vattapaṭipattim vā pūrentassa cetanā. Cetasikaṃ sīlaṃ nāma pāṇātipātādāhi viramantassa virati. Apica cetanā sīlaṃ nāma pāṇātipātādāni pajahantassa satta kammaphacetanā. Cetasikaṃ sīlaṃ nāma “abhijjhaṃ pahāya viḡatābhijjheṇa cetasā viharatī”ti (dī. ni. 1.217) ādinā nayena vutā anabhijjhabāyāpādasamādiṭṭhidhammā. Saṃvaro sīlanti eitha pañcavidheṇa saṃvaro veditabbo pātimokkhasaṃvaro, satisaṃvaro, ñānasamvaro, khantisamvaro, vīriyasamvaroti. [1. Sīlaniddeso, VRI 1.6, Visuddhimaggo (Paṭhamo bhāgo)]

4 *yā ca pāpabhīrukānaṃ kulaputtānaṃ sampattavatthuto virati, sabbampetaṃ saṃvarasīlanti veditabbaṃ. Avitikkamo sīlanti samādinnaṣīlassa kāyikavācasiko anattikkamo. [(1. Sīlaniddeso, VRI 1.7, Visuddhimaggo (Paṭhamo bhāgo))]*

5 *kenaṭṭhena sīlanti sīlanaṭṭhena sīlaṃ. Kimidaṃ sīlanaṃ nāma. Samādhānaṃ vā, kāyakammādināṃ susīlyavasena avippakiṇṇatāti attho. Upadhāraṇaṃ vā, kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ paṭiṭṭhānavasena ādhārabhāvoti attho. Etadeva hettha atthaḍvayaṃ saddalakkhaṇavidū anujānanti. Aññe pana siraṭṭho sīlattho, sīlataṭṭho sīlatthoti evamādināpi nayanettha atthaṃ vaṇṇayanti. [(1. Sīlaniddeso, VRI 1.7, Visuddhimaggo (Paṭhamo bhāgo))]*

are regarded to be its proximate cause (*padatthāna*); its near reason. For when conscience and shame are in existence, morality arises and persists; and when they are not, it neither arises nor persists. This is how morality's characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause, should be understood (Ñānamoli 11-12; *Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI, 1.8).⁶

The Beginning of the Concept of Morality

The Buddha imposed *vinaya* (corpus of discipline) rules only after twenty years of the establishment of the order of disciples, which is also called *paṭhama saṃbodhi samaya* (the first period after the enlightenment). At the beginning, the disciples who had entered the order being ordained as a monk with a pretty realization of the truth, had adopted the monastic life with two factors i. e. Pleasing those who are not pleased (*appasannānaṃ vā pasādāya*) and pleasing more who are pleased (*pasannānaṃ vā bhīyyobhāvāya*). When these two factors are not accomplished the status of monkhood would be declined, which causes the decline of the order of disciples too. The monkhood depends on the good behavior and following the disciplinary codes is essential. The foundation of the morality is the bodily and verbal restraint and the Buddha had laid down *Vinaya* (corpus of discipline) in pursuance of the ten objectives. (1) For monastic community of disciples (*Samgha*) to accept and practise it (*saṅghasutthutāya*); (2) for the welfare of monastic community of disciples (*Samgha*) (*saṅghaphāsutāya*); (3) for suppression of those who transgress the *sīla* (morality) (*dummaṅkūnaṃ puggalānaṃ niggahāya*); (4) for monastic community of disciples (*Samgha*) who love morality (*sīla*) to live in peace (*pesalānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ phāsuvihārāya*); (5) for subjugation of cankers (*āsavas*) of the present (*diṭṭhadhammikānaṃ āsavānaṃ saṃvarāya*); (6) prevention of cankers (*āsavas*) in the future (*samparāyikānaṃ āsavānaṃ paṭighātāya*); (7) for those who have no faith to have faith or who are not pleased to please (*appasannānaṃ pasādāya*) (8) for those who have faith to have more faith or who are pleased to make more pleased (*pasannānaṃ bhīyyobhāvāya*); (9) for perpetuation of the noble *dhamma* (three *Sāsanas*) (*saddhammaṭṭhitīyā*) and (10) for the promotion of the rules of *vinaya* (corpus of discipline) (*vinayānuggahāya*) (*Pārājikā Pāli* 31; *Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI, 1).⁷ Later the imposing of rules of *vinaya* (corpus of discipline) could be seen as developing in various ways of definitions.

Benefits of Morality

The benefits of morality are five in number, are described in the *Mahā-parinibbāna sutta* and the *Visuddhimagga* (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 2.2).⁸

1. Great increase of wealth through his diligence;
2. A favorable reputation;
3. A confident deportment, without timidity, in every society, be it that of nobles, *brāhmins*, householders, or ascetics;
4. A serene death;
5. At the breaking up of the body after death, rebirth in a happy state, in a heavenly world (*Mahā-parinibbāna sutta*, chap5-6).

Furthermore, many other benefits are also described in the *Visuddhimagga*. One becomes dear to the fellows in the life of purity and loved by them, held in respect and honoured by them, let him perfect the morality" (M I 33). This is how morality has as its benefits the several special qualities beginning with non-remorse (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.9).⁹

⁹ *sabrahmacārīnaṃ piyo ca assaṃ manāpo ca garu ca bhāvanīyo cāti, sīlesvevassa paripūrakārī" tiādinā (ma. ni. 1.65) nayena piyamanāpatādayo āsavakkhayapariyosānā anekā sīlānisamsā vuttā. [(Visuddhimaggo (Paṭhamo bhāgo), VRI 1.9)]*

Again it is described that clansmen have no footing in the dispensation without morality. Only the water of morality can wash out the stain in living things and the water of rivers of Ganges, *Yamunā*, *Sarabhū*, *Sarassatī*, *Aciravatī*, *Mahī*, is not able to wash out the stain in things that breathe here in the world. Breezes that come bringing rain, balm of yellow sandalwood, necklaces beside, or gems or soft effulgence of moonbeams are not able to calm and soothe the fevers of men in this world whereas the noble, supremely cool, well-guarded morality quells the flame. No scent is to be found that can be compared with the scent of morality, and that is borne against the wind as easily as with it. No such another stair can be found that climbs to heaven, as morality does. Except the door of morality, another door that gives onto the city of *Nibbāna* (emancipation) also can't be found. There are no kings adorned with jewelry and pearls that shine as does a man restrained adorned with the ornament of morality. Morality entirely does away with dread of self-blame and the like. The morality of those who are virtuous gives gladness always by its fame. It may be known from this brief sketch that how morality brings reward, and how this root of all good qualities robs of its power every fault (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.10).¹⁰

Categories of Morality

In the *Visuddhimagga*, various types of morality are mentioned with various ways.

1. Firstly all the morality is of one kind by reason of its own characteristic of composing.
2. From the viewpoint of keeping and avoiding; that of good behaviour and that of the beginning of the life of purity; abstinence and non-abstinence; dependent and independent; temporary and lifelong; limited and unlimited; mundane and supramundane, it is of two kinds.
3. It is of three kinds as inferior, medium, and superior; as giving precedence to self, giving precedence to the world, and giving precedence to the Dhamma; as adhered to, not adhered to, and tranquillized; as purified, unpurified, and dubious; as that of the trainer, that of the non-trainer, and that of the neither-trainer-non-trainer.
4. It is of four kinds as partaking of diminution, of stagnation, of distinction, of penetration; likewise as that of bhikkhus, of bhikkhunīs, of the not-fully-admitted, of the laity; as

10 *Sāsane kulaputtānaṃ, paṭiṭṭhā natthi yaṃ vinā;
 Ānisaṃsaparicchedaṃ, tassa sīlassa ko vade.
 Na gaṅgā yamunā cāpi, sarabhū vā sarasvatī;
 Ninnagā vāciravatī, mahī vāpi mahānadī.
 Sakkuṇanti visodhetuṃ, taṃ malaṃ idha pāṇinaṃ;
 Visodhayati sattānaṃ, yaṃ ve sīlajalaṃ malaṃ.
 Na taṃ sajaladā vātā, na cāpi haricandanaṃ;
 Neva hārā na maṇayo, na candakiraṇaṅkurā.
 Samayaṅtīdha sattānaṃ, pariṭāhaṃ surakkhitaṃ;
 Yaṃ sameti idaṃ ariyaṃ, sīlaṃ accantasīlalaṃ.
 Sīlagandhasamo gandho, kuto nāma bhavissati;
 Yo samaṃ anuvāte ca, paṭivāte ca vāyati.
 Saggārohaṇasopānaṃ, aññaṃ sīlasamaṃ kuto;
 Dvāraṃ vā pana nibbāna, nagarassa pavesane.
 Sobhantevaṃ na rājāno, muttāmaṇivibhūsitā;
 Yathā sobhanti yatino, sīlabhūsanabhūsitā.
 Attānuvādādibhayaṃ, viddhaṃsayati sabbaso;
 Janeti kittihāsaṅca, sīlaṃ sīlavataṃ sadā.
 Guṇānaṃ mūlabhūtaṃ, dosānaṃ balaghātino;
 Iti sīlassa viññeyyaṃ, ānisaṃsakathāmukhanti. .
 [(Visuddhimaggo (Paṭhamo bhāgo) , VRI 1.10)]*

natural, customary, necessary, due to previous causes; as morality of *Pāimokkha* restraint, of restraint of sense faculties, of purification of livelihood, and that concerning requisites.

5. It is of five kinds as morality consisting in limited purification, etc.; for this is said in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*: “Five kinds of morality: morality consisting in limited purification, morality consisting in unlimited purification, morality consisting in fulfilled purification, morality consisting in unadhered-to purification, morality consisting in tranquilized purification” (Paṭis I 42); likewise as abandoning, refraining, volition, restraint, and non-transgression (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 125).¹¹

As a whole, the morality predominantly could be divided into two categories i.e. the morality of laity and that of the monastic life. The precepts of morality observed by lay people can be regarded as the morality of laity i.e. *pañcasīla* (five precepts), *brahmacariya pañcasīla* (celibate five precepts), *uposatha aṭṭhāṃga sīla* (sacred weekly day or Sabbath observance of eight precepts), *ājīva aṭṭhamaka sīla* (eight precepts with right livelihood), *gahaṭṭha dasasīla* (ten precepts of laity) and these are belonged to the keeping morality (*cāritta sīla*) as they should be followed well. *Pabbajjā dasasīla* (ten precepts of ordained), *upasampadā sīla* (morality of higher ordination) which are observed by the monks and nuns are regarded as the morality belonging to the monastic life. The *catusaṃvara sīla* (four restraint morality) i.e. the morality of *Pāimokkha* restraint (*pāimokkhasaṃvara sīla*), of restraint of sense faculties (*indriyasaṃvara sīla*), of purification of livelihood (*ājīvapārisuddhi sīla*), and that concerning requisites (*paccayasannissitasīla*), is called higher morality (*adhisīla*) as it is higher than the morality of *pañcasīla*, *uposatha aṭṭhāṃga sīla*, *ājīva aṭṭhamaka sīla* and *dasasīla*. Thus by observing the *catusaṃvara sīla*, one reaches the higher status of morality, which could be regarded as *upasampadā sīla*, the morality of higher ordination (Yasassi 3).

The way of practicing and protecting morality

The way of practicing and protecting morality is also described in the Pali canonical literature. In the *Mahāvagga Pāli* it is mentioned as follows.

Yo gavaṃ na vijānāti, na so rakkhati gogaṇaṃ;

evaṃ sīlaṃ ajānanto, kiṃ so rakkheyya saṃvaraṃ (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 125)

(Who does not understand cattle does not guard the herd, so not knowing moral habit, how can he guard restraint? (Horner 127).

From this it becomes clear that to follow the moral disciplinary rules one should accurately realize the morality which should be observed by that person. In the *Visuddhimagga* with many similes it is described that how one should protect the morality. As a hen guards her eggs, or as a yak her tail, or as a mother her only darling child, or like a person who has an only eye, one who engaged one's morality to protect, should be prudent at all times and ever scrupulous (*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*,

¹¹ *Sabbameva tāva idaṃ sīlaṃ attano sīlanalakkhaṇena ekavidhaṃ.*

Cārittavārittavasena duvidhaṃ. Tathā ābhisamācārikaādibrahmacariyakavasena, viratiavirativasena, nissitānissitavasena, kālapariyantaāpāṇakoṭikavasena, sapariyantāpariyantavasena, lokiyalokuttaravasena ca. Tividhaṃ hīnamajjhimapaṇṭitavasena. Tathā attādhipateyyalokādhipateyyadhammādhipateyyavasena, parāmaṭṭhaparāmaṭṭhapatiṭpassaddhisavasena, visuddhāvisuddhavematikavasena, sekkhāsekkhanevasekkhanāsekkhavasena ca.

Catubbidhaṃ hānabhāgiyaṭṭhitibhāgiyavisesabhāgiyanibbedhabhāgiyavasena. Tathā bhikkhubhikkhunīnapasampannagahaṭṭhasīlavasena, pakatiācāradhammatāpubbahetukasīlavasena, pāimokkhasaṃvaraindriyasaṃvaraājīvapārisuddhipaccayasannissitasīlavasena ca. Pañcavidhaṃ pariyantapārisuddhisīlādivasena. Vuttampi cetāṃ paṭisambhidāyaṃ “pañca sīlāni – pariyantapārisuddhisīlaṃ, apariyantapārisuddhisīlaṃ, paripunnāpārisuddhisīlaṃ, aparāmaṭṭhapārisuddhisīlaṃ, paṭiṭpassaddhipārisuddhisīla”nti (paṭi. ma. 1.37). Tathā pahānaveramaṇīcetanāsaṃvarāvītikkamavasena. [(Visuddhimagga (Paṭhamo bhāgo) , VRI 1.11)]

VRI 1.33).¹² It is mentioned in the Buddhist literature that if one who is engaging in the protection of morality passes away, that person will be born in a heavenly world as above-mentioned.

The causes of the defiling of morality are also described in the *Visuddhimagga*. The defiling of morality may occur due to gain, fame, etc., as its cause, and under the seven bonds of sexuality. When one has broken the training course at the beginning or at the end in any instance of the seven classes of offences, the morality of that one is called torn, like a cloth that is cut at the edge. But when one has broken it in the middle, it is called rent, like a cloth that is rent in the middle. When one has broken it twice or thrice in succession, it is called blotched, like a cow whose body is some such colour as black or red with a discrepant colour appearing on the back or the belly. When one has broken it [all over] at intervals, it is called mottled, like a cow speckled [all over] with discrepantcoloured spots at intervals. This in the first place, is how there comes to be tornness with the breach that has gain, etc., as its cause ((*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.48).¹³ So one should be very careful from being defiled the morality which is protected by that person. In the *candana sutta* of *Samyutta Nikāya*, it is described that how one being perfect in morality, can overcome the flood which sweeps one away from emancipation. “One who is always perfect in morality, endowed with wisdom, well concentrated, energetic and resolute, crosses the flood so hard to cross” ((*Chhaṭṭha Saṃgāyanā CD*, VRI 1.64).¹⁴

Conclusion

In this article, the *sīla* (morality) is described as the volition, the consciousness-concomitant, the restraint and the non-transgression of one who is refraining from ten unwholesome deeds and of one who fulfills the practice of the duties; which is based on the *patipatti-sāsana* (the practice of *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*: morality, concentration and insight).

In regard to the meaning, the morality (*sīla*) is described in the sense of composing (*sīlana*) which is its characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*), of head (*sira*) and of cool (*sītala*). The function (*rasa*) of morality is the action to stop misconduct and achievement as the quality of blamelessness in virtuous men. The manifestation (*paccupaṭṭhāna*) of morality is the kind of purity i.e. bodily purity, verbal purity, mental purity and the conscience and shame are regarded to be its proximate cause (*padaṭṭhāna*).

The Buddha laid down *vinaya* (corpus of discipline) rules only after twenty years of the establishment of the order of disciples as at the beginning imposing of rules is not needed due to no offences are occurred by the disciples. It was also done by the Buddha with 10 objectives.

The five main benefits including other benefits of morality are mentioned in the Pali Buddhist literary works. Fivefold division of morality, is also found in the *Visuddhimagga*, among which *upasampdā sīla*, the morality of higher ordination is regarded as the highest one. The morality is the first of the 3 kinds of training (*sikkhā*) that form the 3-fold division of the 8-fold Path (*magga*), i.e. morality,

12 *Kikīva aṇḍaṃ camarīva vāladhiṃ,
Piyaṃva puttāṃ nayanāṃva ekakaṃ;
Tatheva sīlaṃ anurakkhamānakā,
Supesalā hotha sadā sagāravā .
[(Visuddhimagga (Paṭhamo bhāgo), VRI 1.33)]*

13 *So pana khaṇḍādībhāvo lābhayasādihetukena bhedenā ca sattavidhamethunasamyogena ca saṅgahito.
Tathā hi yassa sattu āpattikkhandhesu ādimhi vā ante vā sikkhāpadaṃ bhinnāṃ hoti, tassa sīlaṃ pariyante chinnaśāṭako
viya khaṇḍaṃ nāma hoti. Yassa pana vemajjhe bhinnāṃ, tassa majjhe chiddasāṭako viya chiddaṃ nāma hoti. Yassa paṭipāṭiyā
dve tīni bhinnāni, tassa piṭṭhiyā vā kucchiyā vā uṭṭhitena visabhāgavaṇṇena kālarattādīnaṃ aññatarasarīravāṇṇā gāvī viya
sabalaṃ nāma hoti. Yassa antarantarā bhinnāni, tassa antarantarā visabhāgavaṇṇabanduvicitrā gāvī viya kammāsaṃ nāma
hoti. Evaṃ tāva lābhādīhetukena bhedenā khaṇḍādībhāvo hoti. [(Visuddhimagga (Paṭhamo bhāgo), VRI 1.48)]*

14 *Sabbadā sīlasampanno, paññavā susamāhito;
Āraddhavīriyo pahitatto, oghaṃ tarati duttaraṃ. (Samyutta Nikāya, Sagāthavagga, Candana Suttam, VRI 1.64)*

concentration and wisdom; one of the ten perfections (*pāramis*), the second of the seven treasures (*saptaratana*), one of five sense faculties (*indriyas*), one of five strengths (*balas*). As morality is the foundation of the whole Buddhist practice, it is emphasized the way of protecting and practicing it with many similes.

Certain types of moral rules can be found in all religions in the world. In Buddhism, the disciplinary moral rules are called *sīla* (morality). Practicing and protecting the morality accurately, not only causes the welfare in this very life but also the welfare in next life and whole the cycle of existence and the attainment of the emancipation.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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