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## AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE SEVEN WAYS FOR ERADICATING ASAVA (cankers)

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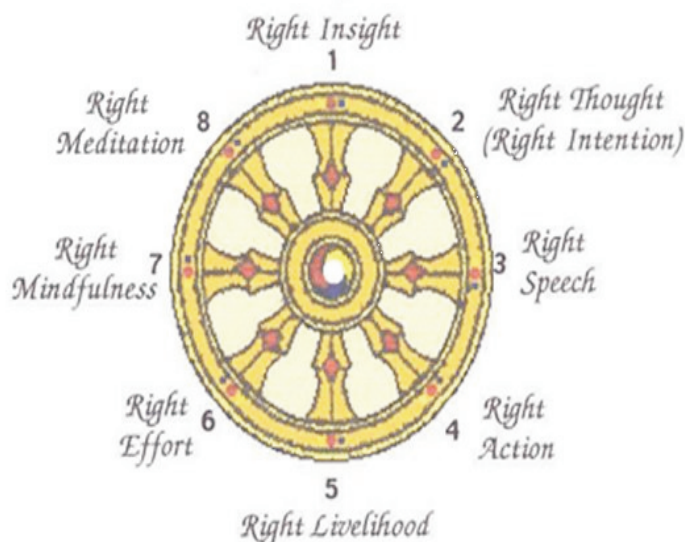
### ABSTRACT

**T**he Buddhist view is that we are unable to know asava due to our avijja. On the other hand, we can be free from all suffering only through the destruction of asava which is the condition for the arising of avijja. For the solution of this problem the Buddha preaches the seven ways of abandoning of asava in Sabbasavasutta, Majjhimanikaya.

**KEYWORDS:** Analytical Study , Eradicating Asava , Noble Eightfold Path.

### INTRODUCTION :

Asava appears in many phases. Since the asavas are described as illness (roga) and unwholesome (akusala), they are factors that should be abandoned. In the Sabbasavasutta seven ways of abandoning of asava are described:



- (1) Asavas to be abandoned by seeing = (asavadassanapahatabba)
- (2) Asavas to be abandoned by restraining=(asavasamvarapahatabba)
- (3) Asavas to be abandoned by using = (asavapatisevanapahatabba)
- (4) Asavas to be abandoned by enduring =(asavaadhivasanapahatabba)
- (5) Asavas to be abandoned by avoiding =(asavaparivajjanapahatabba)
- (6) Asavas to be abandoned by removing=(asavavinodanapahatabba)
- (7) Asavas to be abandoned by developing=(asavabhavanapahatabba)

The Buddha preaches these seven ways of abandoning for the restraint (samvara) of all asavas. The stream of asava is restrained by mindfulness (sati), and finally is blocked by panna. Thus mindfulness is to restrain asava and to cause arising of panna.

These seven ways of abandoning of asavas are describe making use of the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path.

(1)'asavadassanapahatabba' signifies that there are asavas that should be abandoned by sammaditthi. In the world 'ditthi' arises internally and externally when the nature is seen by perverted perceptions (sannavipallasa). The perverted perceptions should be abandoned by right view (sammaditthi). (2)'asavasamvarapahatabba' signifies that there are asavas that should be abandoned by sammasati. It should be known that restraint means restraint of mindfulness. It is confirmed by this explanation of the commentary:

Imesuchasudvaresucattarocatta

rokatvacatuvisatiasavasamvarenapahatabbativuccanti. Sabbath' eva c' ettha sati-samvaro evasamvarotiveditabbo.

(3)'asavapatisevanapahatabba' signifies that there are asavas that should be abandoned by sammajiva, the right mode of living: (miccha-ajivampahayasamma-ajivenajivitamkappeti). Living in this world one has to use the requisites as a bhikkhu who aims at reaching the goal. When he uses his requisites asavas can arise. Hence, he should maintain the life in a proper mode. This shows that the very adherence to the proper mode of life by way of using requisites in the right manner helps to abandon asavas.

(4)'asavaadhivasanapahatabba' signifies that there are asavas that should be abandoned by sammavayama, the right effort. A bhikkhu does not tremble as a weak man trembles even with a slightest cold; he does not shake, does not give up meditation because of the power of his endeavoring. With right striving he becomes bearer of cold and heat etc.

(5)'asavaparivajjanapahatabba' signifies that there are asavas that should be abandoned by sammakammanta, right action :

Kayaduccaritehiarativiratipativirameramaniakiriyaakaranamanajjhappatti vela-anatikkha mosetug hatosammakammantomaggamgammagga-pariyapannam.

The asava arisen from wrongful action (miccha-kammanta) should be abandoned by avoiding (parivajjana).

(6)'asavavinodanapahatabba'signifies that there are asavas that should be abandoned by sammāsankappa which can be called 'wholesome thought':

Nekhammasankappa,avyapadasankappa,avihimsasankappaimevuccantikusalasankappa.

The unwholesome thoughts should be removed by right thought; for example, the thought of sensual pleasure (kamavitakka) should be abandoned by thought of renunciation (nekkhammasankappa). In that manner the Buddha says that a bhikkhu, reflecting wisely, does not tolerate an arisen thought of sensual pleasure ... thought of cruelty etc., abandons it, removes it, does away with it, and annihilates it.

(7)'asavabhavanapahatabba'signifies that the asava that should be abandoned by sammāsamadhi, right concentration:

Yacittasathiti.sammāsamadhisamadhi-sambojjhangomaggamgammagga-pariyapannamaya mvuccatisammāsamadhi

By concentration on enlightenment factors a bhikkhu should abandon the asavas that should be abandoned by developing.

Among the factors of Noble Eight-fold Path, sammavaca is omitted here; however, it seems to be included in sammāsankappa. When thoughts of sensual pleasure (kamavitakka) etc. are abandoned by sammāsankappa, right speech (sammavaca) follows as a matter of course because speech comes after thought.

In the Mahacattarisakasutta of the Majjhimanikayadisposition of speech (vaca-sankhara) is included in the level of sankappa. The speech (vaca) is unnecessary condition for the sekhas who are endeavoring to reach the goal. If there is any necessity, it should be used only for discussing the Dhamma. Hence, the Buddha's admonition is that one should do either of two things: hold discussion on the Dhamma or maintain noble silence (dhammivakathaariyovatunhibhavo). The Buddha praises it in the case of Anuruddha who is under higher training with his fellow bhikkhus (sabrahmacari):

"Whosoever notices that the pots of water for drinking, washing or the latrine are low or empty takes care of them. If they are too heavy for him, he calls someone else by a signal of the hand and they move it by joining hands, but because of this we do not break out into speech. But every five days we sit

together all night discussing the Dhamma. That is how we abide diligent, ardent, and resolute."

Therefore right speech (sammavaca) is not necessarily mentioned in this sutta as it is understood to be included in the sammāsankappa. It is because of this that the Sabbasavasutta is preached by the Buddha to bhikkhus who are under higher training (sekha). As previously stated, the Buddha says that the destruction of asava is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know and see.

In the Sankharupapattisutta of Majjhimanikaya, many rebirth possibilities for the person who possesses five qualities are described. Therein, it is said that one's future abode results from one's aspiration (sankhara). Through frequent thinking of and abiding in a particular sphere he prefers, he gains the possibility to be reborn in that place. If one who has faith, virtue, learning, relinquishing and wisdom aspires to reappear any place of rebirth, then he fixes, establishes and develops his mind on that. As a result of his virtues and the aspiration (sankhara) he will be born in the place as he aspires for. However, if one who possesses these five qualities thinks that by realizing for himself with direct knowledge he might here and now enter upon and abide in the liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom that are states of anasava, by realizing in that manner, this person does not reappear anywhere at all.

There are five qualities for destruction of asava: saddha, sila, suta, caga, panna. 'sutava' or that one should have faith and learning (saddha-suta). When one has faith and learning he behaves (sila) in accordance with dhamma. One who practices in accordance with Dhamma reaches the state of dispassionate as relinquishment (caga). In the purified state of mind right understanding (panna) arises with which one is liberated from asava. In the Sankharupapattisutta, however, the Buddha stresses that not only these five qualities but also the aspiration (sankhara) is a significant condition for destruction of asava. One who has either the five qualities without aspiration, or the aspiration without the qualities, does not have a fixed destination (gati). The destination can only be fixed when both factors are present. It suggests that though one is with panna if he does not have intense aspiration for destruction of asava, this panna can be weakened by the power of asava. In other words panna is not very same as anna (final knowledge). It means that five qualities are mere means, and more important factor is one's own will.

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