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It is quite common in Sri Lanka that Buddhist monks and laities criticize other religions without clear knowledge or understanding of the fundamental philosophical values of such religions. Religious philosophies may be true may not be true as all religious philosophies are based on the concepts of faith rather than secular practical experiences and many assumptions in religions could not be scientifically or materially tested and proved. That is why many consider that religious philosophies are based on faith based assumptions, which are difficult to

Siddhartha Gautama created a sect in the Buddhism rather than inventing a new philosophy. Similar approach can be made to Christianity too.

Many Buddhist monks and laities make ignorance criticism on Christianity that it is a faith based religion and they do not think that almost all concepts of Buddhism are based on faith. The concepts of rebirth, Karma, Heaven, Hell, Nirvana, all are based on faith which cannot be scientifically or materially tested and proved. Although Buddhist devotees believed that Siddhartha Gautama had been attained Nirvana and eliminated rebirth and suffering, they were based on mere faith and nobody can

PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES IN RELATION TO BUDDHISM

be scientifically tested in natural world. However, it is seen in Sri Lanka that despite this practical truth, Buddhists monks and laities publicly insult other religious faiths in spite of the obvious truth that their religion also subject to many philosophical and scientific issues as they make criticism to other religions. The aim of this paper is to critically analyse such issues with a view to disciplining Buddhist clergy and laities that they are also in the same boat and they have no superiority compare to the philosophical base in other religions and they should stop this ugly behaviour if they want to give credibility to their religion.

The Buddhism embarked to this world like other religions and historical facts indicates that Jainism was the source of Buddhism that had been preached by Gautama Buddha. Not only contemporary era of Gautama Buddha, but also in modern era, it can be seen that India is a place where frequently emerges many religious faiths or some kind of life philosophies, which are based on current or past religious philosophies, it is possible to imagine that the life style of Indian people involves in too many mythical religious philosophies or some kind of esotericism from the birth of children and kids starts to think about these mythical philosophies in their life rather than considering factual concepts or scientific reality based upon their practice or thinking. It is quite clear that Gautama Buddha manipulated Buddhism adapting many ideas from Jainism and many Buddhist scholars accept it without any argument. Obviously many religions; even Christianity was originated to the world as an extension of Judaism. The New Testament of Christianity clearly indicates that Jesus Christ attended to Jewish religious activities and shared the concept of Judaism with people. People when they are growing they gain abilities of broader or different thinking which called in modern era as lateral thinking. Lord Gautama Buddha may had been a lateral thinker in Jainism using his broader knowledge gained from the education in Greek, where had been an ideal ground for the generation philosophical thinking.

However, Buddhists in Sri Lanka state that before Gautama Buddha, there were 24 Buddha manifested to the world and Gautama Buddha was the latest and Maitreya Buddha will be the next. What were the philosophical base of those 24 Buddha and did them had been revealed or preached same Buddhism or the Buddhism preached by Gautama Buddha is unknown to Buddhists because there is no historical evidence for these 24 Buddha and their philosophies or preaching in the contemporary world. The logical issue in relation to 24 Buddha and Gautama Buddha emerges is current Buddhism, which is believed to be revealed by Gautama Buddha was really a product of Gautama Buddha or was it manipulated by previous Buddha. This issue has not been resolved by Buddhist gurus in Sri Lanka and they blindly believe Buddhism is a product of Gautama Buddha, who revealed Buddhism and attained Nirvana. If Sri Lanka's Buddhists believe that current Buddhism is a work of Gautama Buddha, then, what kind of Buddhism was revealed by previous Buddha and were there any differences between these Buddhism, which were preached by previous 24 Buddha and Gautama Buddha. There is no clear evidence that Gautama Buddha preached his own philosophical thinking and the inventor of Buddhist religion was Prince Siddhartha Gautama. Within Hinduism in India we can see that many concepts of Hinduism such as Shiva, Krishna and many others and if we apply same approach to Buddhism, it is quite clear that



scientifically or materially tested and proved that Siddhartha Gautama exactly attained Nirvana because there is no provable evidence and it is a mere faith of Buddhists. After the death of Gautama Buddha, his followers believed that Gautama Buddha attained Nirvana because he was talking and preaching about Nirvana. It was like resurrection of Jesus Christ and going to heaven. All these are based on mere faith and it is quite obvious that Buddhist monks and laities in Sri Lanka make public insults to faith based other religions while they are in the same boat.

The Buddhism, which is believed to be preached by Gautama Buddha is based on four truths (Chaturarya Sathya), which are entirely based on faith and scientifically or materially they cannot be happened. The generally accepted belief in this world is if anyone does good things, he or she may get good returns. Recent scientific discoveries have proved that knowledge is so broader and the universe also broader than our thinking or knowledge. We know only about our planet (earth) but we do not know about the broad quantum of the universe and contents of it. It is so mystery that may not discover or reveal within our life time. Therefore, we must admit that knowledge is so broader and as a tiny part of this massive universe, human cannot exactly gain the right knowledge of universe within a limited time period. The natural order of universe so complex, human cannot exactly understand the origin and existence of this natural order of universe. In such a situation, the achievement of first truth of the Buddhism is immaterial to human being even though it is believed by Buddhist devotees that Siddhartha Gautama achieved it. If Siddhartha Gautama really achieved four truths, he could have revealed many unknown fact about universe, however, it was not happen.

When we are logically thinking, we can find many philosophical issues in Buddhism, which has a kind of philosophical based that is also based on faith. If any religion has not a philosophy based on faith, it would be a science rather than a religion. However, Buddhism is not science but it is a belief like other religions. In this situation, we need to understand, nobody should insult other religions, which are in same boat. We do not know what will happen to us after our death because we have no experience after death. In such a situation, we should respect all religions rather than insulting.

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