

Panchsīla Versus Panch Anuvrata A Comparative Study

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The Shramana faith in India includes Jainism and Buddhism. A Shramana, also called Sramana in Sanskrit and Samana in Pali, is an itinerant monk in ascetic Indian traditions. Notable religious leaders among the Shramanas were Mahavira and Gautama Buddha. Vardhamana Mahavira was the founder of Jainism and the last Tirthankara of the Jainas. Among his many titles are "a great Brahmin," "a great preacher," "a great guardian," "a great pilot," and "a great recluse."

He is also referred to as a Supreme Personality. He was born in 599 B.C. and died in 527 B.C. He was the second son of the Kshatriya family in Magadha. His father, Siddhartha, belonged to the Kashyap gotra and the clan of Jnatikas Kshatriyas, and his mother was Trisala. On the day of his birth, all prisoners were released, and public celebrations lasting ten days marked the occasion. At the age of 30, he left his family and set out in search of true knowledge

On the other hand, Gautam Buddha was the founder of Buddhism. Born in Lumbini, near Kapilavastu, as a prince of the Kapilavastu monarch in 567 B.C., he abandoned his family to pursue enlightenment. He attained the higher knowledge at Gaya. During that period when both schools of thought were growing and expanding, there didn't seem to be any competition between them. This is because both religions almost believed in the same facts and philosophy of life. However, they disagreed on certain views, such as salvation and the soul, which led them to part ways.

My research is focused on the "Panchsīla Versus Panch Anuvrata A Comparative Study", wherein the ethical frameworks of Buddhism and Jainism shall be represented by Panchsīla and Panch Anuvrata, respectively. These frameworks offer deep insights into the ethical principles and spiritual objectives of these two ancient Indian religions. Both principles serve as essential guidelines for lay practitioners, aiming to cultivate a disciplined and morally sound life.

The school of Buddhism developed in the eastern part of India. At the same time, Jainism, with almost similar thoughts, was also developing in the same region. The primary cause for the rise of Jainism and Buddhism was the religious instability in India in the 6th century B.C. The general populace did not approve of the elaborate rituals and sacrifices that were promoted in the later Vedic period.

The sacrificial ceremonies were found to be too costly, and the superstitious beliefs and mantras confused the people.

The teachings of the Upanishads, an alternative to the system of sacrifices, were highly philosophical and therefore not easily understood by all.

In the best interest of people, there was a need for a simple, concise, and understandable path to salvation for everyone. This religious teaching should be available in a language that people understand. Buddha and Mahavira fulfilled this need with their teachings.

Tensions in Indian society arose from the strict caste system in place, where higher classes enjoyed benefits not available to lower classes. Kshatriyas objected to the priestly class's hegemony. It's noteworthy that both Buddha and Mahavira belonged to the Kshatriya origin. The growth of trade led to the improvement in the economic condition of the Vaisyas. In response, they sought to improve their social standing, but the traditional Varna system didn't permit this. As a result, they started to lend their support to Buddhism and Jainism. It was the merchant class that primarily backed these emerging religions.

Buddha and Mahavira rejected the rigidity of the Vedic religion and caste system. Both believed that all people are inherently equal. Their thought and philosophies attracted people from all walks of life, rich and poor, men and people and high caste and low castes. The doctrine of non-violence and karma was taught by them, and both gained much popularity

They also rejected the supremacy of the Brahmins and opened their religion to all castes.

The moral norms prescribed by Buddhist teachings apply to both the lay and monastic communities of Buddhist monks and nuns. The lay community is expected to abide by the Pancha-Sila, which comprises five precepts that they should regularly practice. The five precepts are the fundamental principles of moral conduct in both the Theravada and Mahayana traditions of Buddhism. While a more sophisticated set of eight precepts is also observed by lay Buddhists on specific religious days, such as full moon or new moon days of the month, and during some types of meditation retreats. According to Pali tradition, 227 regulations for fully ordained monks and 311 rules for nuns make up the fundamental code of monastic discipline.

In the Theravada tradition of Buddhism, mainly practiced in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos, the Buddhist teachings are preserved in the original language of Pali. Pali was the language spoken in the regions of India where Gautama Buddha lived and preached. As a result, the different codes of morality are also preserved and recited in the Pali language. In Buddhism, there are five precepts known as Panch Sila, which everyone, whether monk or layman, must undertake to observe.

*They are Pānātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi
Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi
Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi
Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi
Surā-meraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī
sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi ²*

Pali verses can be translated into English as follows:

"I guarantee to take after these statutes: abstain from hurting living things, abstain from taking things that are not given to me, abstain from sexual wrongdoing, abstain from making untrue articulations, and abstain from drinking liquor that will make me intoxicated and careless."

Before committing to the five precepts, most practicing Buddhists will seek refuge in the Triple Gem. The Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha make up the Triple Gem. In the Pali language, "Buddha" means the "Awakened One" or "Enlightened One," "Dhamma" refers to the Buddha's

teachings, and "Sangha" represents the monastic community of monks and nuns who have either attained full liberation or are aspirants of the higher spiritual path. To take refuge in the Triple Gem, one would recite the following formula:

*Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Dutiyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Dutiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatiyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Tatiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi³*

The English meaning of *pali* verses are as under

*I take refuge in the Buddha.
I take refuge in the Dhamma.
I take refuge in the Sangha.
For the second time,
I take refuge in the Buddha.
I take refuge in the Dhamma.
I take refuge in the Sangha.
For the third time,
I take refuge in the Buddha.
I take refuge in the Dhamma.
I take refuge in the Sangha.*

The five precepts, which relate to four bodily actions and one verbal action, serve as the fundamental ethical code for lay Buddhists. They aim to cultivate skillful virtues in bodily and verbal actions, which ideally should be observed throughout their lives. These precepts are not rigid, inflexible rules or commandments from a divine authority with punishments for non-adherence or rewards for strict observance.

The five precepts are guidelines or training rules that lay Buddhists choose to follow willingly and on their own accord, realizing the benefits for both themselves and others. In Buddhism, everyone is accountable for their happiness and suffering, which arise from their actions based on the universal law of cause and effect. Those who regularly and sincerely observe the five precepts will be able to uphold their morality and progress in their spiritual practice towards achieving ultimate liberation from human suffering.

When someone initially becomes a Buddhist, they typically recite and commit to abiding by the five precepts, and they also seek refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. The precepts are generally spoken by practicing Buddhists in front of a statue or picture of the Buddha, or after being recited by a member of the Buddhist clergy.

It is essential for them to regularly renew these guidelines, and some manage to do so through

daily recitations. The purpose of this renewal is to remind oneself of the importance of following these guidelines for personal well-being in this life and in future lives, as well as for the benefit of others. It also helps in facilitating their spiritual journey with a purified mind. Merely observing the five precepts to avoid social disrespect or fear of punishment for breaking the laws, whether of the land or God or other divine authorities, will not bring moral or spiritual benefits. Some Buddhists recite the five precepts on special occasions or regularly with little intention of observing them, but this will not benefit themselves or others. The precepts themselves possess no magical powers to confer benefits upon those who recite them but do not observe them properly. Before the commencement of any religious activity, it is usual in the majority of Buddhist countries to recite the five precepts and the three refuges. Whether a specific precept is violated or not is determined more by the presence or absence of intention in carrying out a physical or verbal action included in the five precepts, rather than the action itself.

On the other hand, in Jainism teaching, the householder and the ascetic are the two wheels on which the cart of Jain ethical discipline moves on quite smoothly. To the credit of Jaina Acaryas, whenever they have prescribed any discipline to be followed, they have always kept both of these rules in mind. They never favored confusing the obligations of one with the other. As a result, just as Jainism developed the *acara* of the Muni, it also created the *acara* of the householder. Overwhelmed by the ascetic impulse, it hasn't overlooked the householder's way of life. By developing the doctrine of *Aṇuvratas*, *Guṇavratas* and *Sikṣavratas* for the householder it has shown how the householder should direct his course of life. The distinctive contribution of Jainism to Indian ethics, in my opinion, is the doctrine of *Anuvratas*, *Gunavratas*, and *Sikshavratas*.

The entire Jaina ethical system strives to put the *Ahimsa* principle into reality. The Jaini is regarded as the ethical *Summum Bonum* of human life, the realization of perfect *Ahiṃsā*. *Ahiṃsā* is so central in Jainism that it may be incontrovertibly called the beginning and the end of Jain religion.

The spiritual welfare of society increases, and the nation's reputation grows as individuals' character becomes more tolerant and elevated. Tirthankar Paramatma prescribes twelve highly psychologically significant vows to attain perfection in character. The prescribed codes of conduct and observance are not merely useful for practice but essential and unavoidable.

Atichār refers to errors of commission and omission, which can be committed by mistake, knowingly, or through non-observance. If there is a partial breach of a vow, it is considered an *Atichar* violation.

Each of the twelve vows has five *Atichars*, or transgressions, and is broken into three parts. To fully perform the austerities, one must also give up the *Atichars*. The vows are as follows:

Anuvrata (Five Minor Vows): Anuvrata means following vows to a lesser degree compared to the same vows observed by *sadhus* and *sadhvis*. They are:

1) *Ahimsa Anuvrat* - Non-violence 2) *Satya Anuvrat* – Truthfulness 3) *Achaurya Anuvrat* - Non-stealing 4) *Brahmacharya Anuvrat* – Chastity 5) *Aparigraha Anuvrat* - Non-attachment

The *Gunavrata*, also known as the Three Merits Vows, helps to protect *anuvratas* by enhancing their effectiveness and quality. They are given as follows:

6) Dik Vrata - Limited areas of activity vow 7) Bhoga-Upbhoga Vrata - Limited use of consumable and non-consumable items vow 8) Anartha-danda Vrata - Avoidance of purposeless sins vow.

The Shikshavrata (Four Disciplinary Vows) offer a milder experience of the life of a Sadhu and help us prepare better for anuvrata. They are as follows:

9) Samayik Vrata: Meditation vows of limited duration 10) Desavakasika Vrata: Activity vow of limiting space 11) Pausadha Vrata: Ascetic's life vow of limited duration 12) Atithi Samvibhaga Vrata: Limited charity.

The observer of *Ahinsa anavrata* should avoid gambling, hunting, drinking, meat-eating, and the like. Vegetarianism is therefore prescribed. . It confines us to the inevitable harm done to Jivas who only have one sense. This is the philosophy of vegetarianism propounded by Jainism. However, the head of the household sometimes needs to use harsh, unpleasant, and forceful language for self-defence, to manage the household, and for professional purposes. Therefore, he follows the vow of truthfulness. The observer of Satya Anuvrata uses words that are soothing, gentle, and ennobling. If any speech causes harm, it should be withheld. Ultimately, the criteria of truth (Satya) and untruth (*Asatya*) are nonviolence (*Ahinsa*) and violence (*hinsa*) respectively. Thus, truthful speech should lead to nonviolence.

Brahmacarya: Sexual passion is Abstinence. Completely abstaining from sexual desires is known as Bṛhmacarya-Mahavrata. For married individuals, practicing Bṛhmacarya Aṇuvrata means abstaining from sexual contact with anyone other than their spouse. Abstaining from adultery, prostitution, and unnatural sexual activities is considered Bṛhmacarya Ahiṁsa. Householders, or śravaka, are supposed to observe the seven Śilavratas, which are comprised of the three Guṇavratas and the four Śikṣavratas, in addition to the Aṇuvratas. The observance of Aṇuvratas is upheld by these Śilavratas. They affect an improvement in the observance of Aṇuvratas.

Asteya: Asteya refers to taking things without the owner's consent due to one's desires. This is essentially considered as depriving someone of their life force. The practice of Asteya requires seeking permission before taking anything, as observed by a Muni. However, householders are allowed to use common things like water without explicit permission, as a part of observing Asteya-Anuvrata. It's important to note that a Muni does not use even the common things without them being given by others. Household members should neither take nor give things forgotten or dropped by others. Any improper methods used to obtain things, such as purchasing costly items at reduced prices, are considered stealing. Additionally, actions like adulteration, abetment of theft, receiving stolen property, using false weights and measures, smuggling, and similar behaviors are also considered forms of stealing.

Aparigraha: The concept of attachment is known as Parigraha. It explains that even if someone renounces external possessions if they still feel attached to those things, they are not truly practising Aparigraha. To eliminate internal attachment, one must also let go of external possessions. Attachment is a form of harm (*hinsa*) and those aiming to practice non-violence (*Ahiṁsa*) should avoid attachment.

The householder is unable to completely give up all possessions, so he should limit his attachment to wealth, livestock, crops, buildings, etc. This is called Parigraha Parimana Vrata. The Muni

follows the Aparigraha Mahavrata and offers up all material belongings. Both of these practices emphasize moral values such as truthfulness, non-violence, non-stealing, non-possessiveness, and celibacy. In Jainism, the principle of non-violence is viewed as extreme, while Buddhism takes a more moderate approach.

I have thoroughly studied the traditions of both religions, particularly the concepts of "pancha sila" and "panch anuvrat," which refer to the five vows in Buddhism and Jainism for laypersons, householders, monks, and bhikkhunis. It appears that the cultures of both traditions have influenced each other.

In both Jainism and Buddhism, there are five primary precepts that guide followers in their conduct. The first precept of Jainism is ahimsā, or non-violence, which emphasizes non-violence against all living beings. Similarly, the first precept in Buddhism is to refrain from killing, extending compassion to all living beings.

The one precept in Jainism is Satya (truthfulness), encouraging followers to always speak the truth. Similarly, the one precept in Buddhism also emphasizes the importance of truthfulness.

That one precept in Jainism is Asteya (non-stealing), promoting honesty and non-stealing. Likewise, the one precept in Buddhism also emphasizes refraining from stealing.

Further, one more precept in Jainism is Brahmacharya (celibacy for monks and nuns, and no sexual misconduct for lay people). In Buddhism, likewise, one precept also calls for refraining from sexual misconduct and, for monks and nuns, observing celibacy.

The last precept in Jainism is Aparigraha (non-materialism and non-attachment to material things). Meanwhile, the last precept in Buddhism encourages followers to refrain from intoxicating drinks and drugs which lead to carelessness, with an underlying message of non-attachment. (The only last precept is somewhat different, but not completely different since the Buddhist version also calls for no attachment)

In Jainism, vegetarianism is required for both laypeople and monks. Though strict vegetarianism is not necessary in Buddhism some non-vegetarian monks are found in China, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. A monk is expected by monastic custom to consume whatever is offered in his bowl, even if it means begging for food. The monk was exempt from the rule against eating provided meat if he heard or knew that an animal had been killed expressly for him. Triple rule However, this is not often evident to laypeople, and many lay Buddhists have turned to vegetarianism to better follow the precepts and practise the Dhamma. The Buddhist rule against murdering living things often revolves around intent, but the Janis go a step further and forbid killing altogether. Some Janis wrap their mouths in masks in the belief that this will stop microbes from dying. In addition, they cut the leaves off the root plant but do not eat animal products or root veggies, thus they do not even destroy the plant. Compared to the Jain diet, Buddhists who practise vegetarianism—which accepts the consumption of root vegetables and animal products like dairy, eggs, and honey—do not appear to be all that extreme.

The Buddhists and Jain equally believe that the world is full of misery and that the object of religion is to deliver life free from the miseries of this world by eliminating rebirth. This concept of the Janis and the Buddhists is that the world is full of miseries. Life is the result of Karma, the

idea is similar to the Upanishads and the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila Muni.

Both religions were later divided into two sects. Buddhism was divided into Mahayana and Theravada, while Jainism was divided into Svetambara and Digambara. Each sect had its own "three gems" or "Tri Ratna." The Tri Ratna of Jainism were right philosophy, right knowledge, and right character. The Tri Ratna of Buddhism were Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha.

Jainism and Buddhism concur that the universe is without a beginning and an end, and that no personal God is its creator. Without beginning or end, ye monks are this round of rebirth (*Sansara*). The Jain scriptures also teach the same thing this universe is eternal and no god is the creature of it. There cannot be discerned a first beginning of beings. Who are engulfed in unawareness and shackled by thirst and continually wander again and again to run towards a modern birth. Five, in number Sariputra, are the fates that many befall after death, namely, the passage into hell-worlds, the animal kingdom, the realm of *preta*, the world of men and abodes of Gods,”

The Jain and the Buddhists both believe that no god can give us pleasure or pain or get as liberation. One can be liberated by one's own effort.

“Any form of grace cannot bring about freedom from suffering, particularly not the assistance of a personal God. Only one's strength and self-action can accomplish this.”

As per the Jainism religion, they have three ways of practice in ethical conduct (*Ratnatraya*, the three jewels of Jainism) to attain enlightenment or *Moksha* are as under:

1. Right Faith (*Samyak Darśana*), That was called as the initial development because it intended a firm faith in the primary principles of Jainism.
2. Right Knowledge (*Samyak Jāna*) is the correct, accurate, suitable, and appropriate understanding of reality, the *tattvas*.
3. Right Conduct (*Samyak Carita*) is the appliance of Right Knowledge (*Samyak Jāna*) and Right Faith (*Samyak darśana*) then developed all together in order to work out control over inner desires and reach a stage where there is no attachment or hatred.

On the other hand, the Goutam Buddha offered this stage to the individual who wants to train to become a noble one or get the supreme bliss like that of the Buddha and Arahanta, and achieve the ultimate truth (*Nibbāna*, Pāli). This highly developed principle is the Noble Eightfold Path (*Atthangika-magga*, Pāli) in Buddhism.

Buddhism emphasizes the four meditations (*bhāvanā*): *mettā* (loving-kindness), *karuṇā* (compassion), *muditā* (sympathetic joy), and *upekkhā* (equanimity). The faith scripture declares that these ought to be meditated upon by everyone (*Maitripramo dakarunyamadhyasthanica satvagunadhikaklisyamana-vinayesu*). They are realizable through concentration (*yogakkhamani nibbanam ajjhagamam*), and are free from ageing (*ajaram*), Salvation are often earned with the stop of the chain of causation. Liberation (*moksha*), in Jainism, may be a condition of the pure soul, free from all bondage of karmas, peaceful, enlightened and eternal. Each religion believes that each being experience fruits of his good and bad deeds in the present or future life and rebirth continues until the attainment of salvation.

Both Jainism and Buddhism observe Vratas (Vows) using different terminology. Jainism uses Paca-Vratas while Buddhism uses Panca-Sila. However, both religions share the essential principle of Ahimsā (Non-violence). Both religions emphasize moral values such as Satya, Ahimsa, Asteya, Aparigraha, and Brahmacharya. It can be concluded that the philosophy of both systems is similar. Those seeking freedom from suffering must follow the eightfold path of Buddhism or the threefold path of Jainism. Followers of Jainism and Buddhism should understand each other's literature and be friendly, recognizing that their philosophies have originated from a common source. These shared principles reflect deep cultural and philosophical harmony, guiding practitioners towards a life of virtue and spiritual fulfillment. By promoting ethical behavior and spiritual development, both Panchsila and Panch Anuvrata play a crucial role in shaping the moral foundation of their respective religious communities.

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