



Sacrifice, Happiness, and Liberation in the Buddhist Perspective

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Abstract

Ceremonial rituals are a religious expression in the form of worship with the use of meaningful symbolic mediums to seek happiness. In some rituals, the sacrifice of a living creature is done for various purposes and with different background contexts. This research then aims to look at the Buddhist perspective of sacrifice, happiness, and liberation, as well as look at the link between sacrifice, happiness, and liberation. This qualitative descriptive research utilizes the library research approach. The results of this research then found that the Buddha does not oppose those who conduct the sacrifice of living beings because Buddhism does not force teachings upon other groups. All parties have their own beliefs and consequences according to the concept of *karma* law. The Buddha only accepted sacrifice or offerings without the killing of a living creature. Killing a living being is a violation of the first Buddhist *Pancasila*, stated as *Pāṇatipātā Veramaṇi*. Someone who seeks happiness through torturing or sacrificing another being who also wants happiness, will not gain happiness in this life or the next life, and vice versa. The sacrifice of living beings is the third inner burden (*saṃyojana*), also known as *Silabbataparāmāsa*. *Samyojana* is an obstacle that must be overcome to improve the spirit to achieve the highest form of happiness, or liberation known as *Nibbana*.

A. INTRODUCTION

Rituals are religious ceremonies done to express faith in the form of worship and devotion or worship with the usage of symbolic mediums that hold certain meanings. Rituals aren't only known by the people who believe in a certain religion, but also by the common people and communities (Magiman & Nordin, 2021). These ceremonial rituals are done by sacrificing objects and living beings, such as animals, that are seen as having their meaning by the people or community that practice it. Some of the public believe that these ceremonial sacrifices would hopefully bring happiness to humans and even bring eventual liberation from suffering (Miri & Aryamanesh, 2022).

Rituals that are conducted by the Javanese, specifically the *Tenger* tribe as an example, are called the *Mayu Desa* tradition. Lelono explains that the ritual in the *Mayu Desa* tradition is done as an offering with the sacrifice of a cow to *Punden Payung/Sari* which has always protected the village and kept them away from danger. The offering is directed to the village's revered ancestor spirits. These ancestral spirits consist of *Tunggul Payung* and *punden-punden* that exist in the

village, such as *punden banyu*, *banaspati/kuburan*, and *prapatan desa* (Nuraini et al., 2023).

The religious Hindu perspective about sacrifice is explained by Nyoman, in the Book of Rg Veda X.71.11, that "An individual is tasked with reciting sloka-sloka Weda, an individual is tasked with singing praises in the Sakwari, another individual that has understood the Weda teaches the contents of Weda, and another teaches the conduct of holy sacrifice (*Yadnya*)" (Swapna & Nagarajan, 2023). *Yadnya* is a holy sacrifice meant to decrease arrogance or ego and to seek a higher form of life pleasures. Every sacred sacrifice gives way to the soul's development. *Yadnya* is then grouped based on the presented medium and the conduct. This categorization results in four different types of *Yadnya*. *Tapa Yadnya* is a sacrifice by controlling the senses (ones that pursue the drive for desire); *Drwya Yadnya* is the sacrifice of objects or items belonging to humans; *Jnana Yadnya* is the practice of knowledge and wisdom for the well-being and happiness of all life in the world; and *Yoga Yadnya* is the act of doing *yoga* (the controlling of breath and centering of the mind) to connect the self with a higher presence (Jayanti et al., 2024). Hindu people use



animals as part of *upakara*. The usage of animals has been said in various scriptures used as a reference for them to conduct the teachings of their religion. It is known from the Book of Manawa Dharmasastra V.42 that God created animals and plants for sacrificial ceremonies, for the good of the earth. Furthermore, the Balinese Hindu people believe that sacrificed animals will receive a better place after their death because holy prayers are read to them before they are sacrificed (Suwadnyana et al., 2023).

In the perspective of Christianity, sacrifice is understood as an offering to God, as a replacement for the sinful human, or food for the gods, and others. This system of sacrifice indirectly reveals that there is something greater than man because the sacrifice is presented to something or someone greater than humans. People are aware of their mistakes and provide sacrifice to this greater being, and as a result, the consequences are no longer given to the person who committed the wrong (Nicolaides, 2021). The New Testament explains that sacrifices in the form of goats or sheep are considered only as a symbol, as in no way that the blood of a male ox or a male sheep can erase sin, meanwhile, the blood of Christ that was presented once is the perfect sacrifice to erase man's sin for all time (Hilton III et al., 2020).

Sacrifice in the perspective of Islam as explained by Yulianto, states that butchering livestock (goat, cow, or camel) on the holiday of Idul Adha, sacrificial law is *sunnah muakad*. The benefit of sacrifice in this regard is that Allah will erase the sins of the man who conducted the sacrifice and will receive an abundance of blessings from Allah (Allie, 2023). On the day of doomsday, those animals will testify and become proof of their obedience to Allah. This boon from sacrificial worship is one of Allah's most loved worships and brings a mission of caring for fellow man and remembers the test of love from Allah to Prophet Ibrahim (Le Duc, 2023).

This research will discuss sacrifice, happiness, and liberation from a Buddhist perspective. Furthermore, the author will analyze the connection between the sacrifice of living beings with the happiness of humans and the main purpose of reaching liberation from suffering as the end goal for human life.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Buddhism Perspective

Buddhism, as a worldview fostered by Siddhartha Gautama, or Buddha, focuses on the four Noble Truths as the basis of its teachings. First, the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha*) indicates that human existence is characterized by suffering, dissatisfaction, and instability. Furthermore, The Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya*) states that the root of suffering is unlimited desire and desire (San et al., 2023). To overcome suffering, Buddhism teaches the Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha*), which can be achieved by controlling desires and desires. The Way Out of Suffering (*Magga*) refers to the Middle Way, an eight-element practical guide that includes the right understanding, right intention, right action, and other elements (Thepa, 2022).

From a Buddhist perspective, the concept of *Anatta* rejects the existence of an eternal soul, asserting that self-identity is an illusion. Meanwhile, *Anicca*'s teachings remind us that all phenomena are temporary and always changing. *Dukkha*, or suffering, is considered an inevitability of life, and achieving enlightenment is considered the solution to overcoming suffering. Karma, as a natural law, indicates that a person's actions shape his or her future fate or life (Oh, 2022).

In spiritual practice, Buddhism emphasizes the importance of meditation as a means to achieve enlightenment and a deep understanding of reality. Schools of Buddhism, such as Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana, may place different emphases on some aspects of Buddhism, but the core similarities remain in a deep understanding of the nature of suffering and the search for a way out of the cycle of birth, suffering, and reincarnation (Segall, 2021).

The view that self-identity is an illusion, or *Anatta*, provides a profound understanding of the infinite nature and constant change in human existence. By rejecting the concept of an eternal soul, Buddhism encouraged its adherents to see existence as a constantly changing process, with no fixed entities. It teaches awareness of impermanence and invites the practice of wisdom in dealing with all aspects of life (Lin & Khoo, 2022).

The concept of *Anicca*, or sustainability, involves the understanding that everything in this world is temporary. This is not only a theoretical concept, but also an invitation to develop resilience and mental toughness in facing life's changes and challenges. Understanding this impermanent nature paves the way



for acceptance and inner peace, teaching humans not to be fixated on momentary pleasure or temporary suffering (Hatala et al., 2020).

In a practical aspect, Buddhism underscores the role of meditation as a means of achieving enlightenment and a deep understanding of reality. Through meditation, Buddhists seek to develop concentration, awareness, and a deep understanding of their inner nature (Vörös, 2021). Meditation is not only a way to calm the mind, but also a tool for understanding the nature of dukkha and achieving deeper peace. Thus, the Buddhist perspective includes more than just a set of ethical or religious teachings; it is a comprehensive view of the nature of life, suffering, and the path to wisdom and liberation (Khong, 2021).

2. Sacrifice

A sacrifice is a voluntary act or gift that a person performs by giving up something of value, whether in the form of time, energy, possessions, or even personal happiness, for the greater good or the good of others. The concept of sacrifice involves the understanding that the beneficiary may be of greater value than the loss suffered by the individual making the sacrifice. Acts of sacrifice often arise from compassion, empathy, or a feeling of responsibility for the needs or well-being of others (Bissell, 2022).

In many cultures and value systems, sacrifice is considered a display of sincerity and kindness. This activity can manifest in various forms, from providing financial assistance to those in need to sacrificing time to help others or face challenges together. On a personal level, sacrifice can also mean setting aside one's interests for the sake of another person's happiness or well-being, or even setting aside personal dreams in favor of a shared dream (Bradford & Boyd, 2020).

Sacrifice is often associated with moral and spiritual values, especially in the context of religion or philosophy which emphasizes the importance of caring for others. In some cases, sacrifice was even considered a path to enlightenment or liberation. However, it is important to remember that sacrifice is not always without consequences, and the individual who sacrifices may experience significant personal burdens or sacrifices (Pospíšil & Macháčková, 2021).

Although sacrifice is often appreciated and considered noble, it is important to remember that

balance and sustainability are also important in maintaining a balanced personal life. Too many sacrifices without paying attention to one's well-being can harm mental and physical health. Therefore, it is important to understand individual limits in the context of sacrifice, maintain balance, and assess whether the sacrifices made bring positive benefits overall (Lynne & Czap, 2023).

3. Happiness

Happiness is an emotional and psychological condition that characterizes feelings of joy, contentment, and contentment in one's life. It is a positive experience that involves overall well-being, including aspects such as social life, work, personal relationships, and personal accomplishments. Happiness is often thought of as a general goal pursued by individuals, and views on what brings happiness can vary across cultures and individuals (Kun & Gadaneč, 2022).

Happiness is often not only related to material achievements or external success but is also closely related to internal aspects, such as a positive attitude, gratitude, and deep relationships. Happiness can be found in simple, everyday moments, such as being with family or friends, achieving a small goal, or feeling inner peace. Additionally, the experience of happiness is subjective and can vary for each individual, depending on their values, hopes, and life goals (Oishi & Westgate, 2022).

Several psychological theories, such as Martin Seligman's positive theory, emphasize the importance of elements such as pleasure, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment in achieving sustainable happiness. Seligman describes this as Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment. This approach shows that happiness is not only hedonistic but also involves deeper and more sustainable aspects of life (Choon et al., 2022).

Although happiness is often pursued by many people, positive psychology research also shows that happiness can be understood as a continuously developing process, not an end goal. Varying emotions, challenges, and failures are part of life, and these experiences can also contribute to long-term happiness. Therefore, achieving happiness does not necessarily mean avoiding difficulties, but involves an adaptive way of overcoming challenges and living life with awareness



and appreciation of precious moments (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2021).

4. Liberation

Liberation, in its religious dimension, attains deep meaning and varies according to the particular religious tradition. In Buddhism, for example, liberation or Nirvana is the highest attainment that signifies liberation from the cycle of birth, suffering, and reincarnation. It reflects a state in which the individual achieves a thorough understanding of reality, transcends desires and desires, and attains lasting inner peace. In this context, liberation involves deep inner transformation, achieving enlightenment, and breaking the cycle of *samsara* (Grunwald, 2021).

In the context of psychology, liberation is often linked to the concept of personal growth and achieving optimal mental health. In psychological therapy, liberation may involve a process of understanding and integrating traumatic experiences or emotional abuse. This process, known as “self-liberation” or “emotional liberation,” involves efforts to understand, accept, and overcome emotional baggage that may be hindering one's personal development. Liberation at the psychological level can also involve developing self-awareness, self-acceptance, and achieving mental balance (Wyatt & Ampadu, 2022).

In certain religious traditions, such as Christianity, liberation is often associated with forgiveness of sins through faith and repentance. Deliverance here involves the restoration of man's relationship with God and deliverance from the sin that separates the individual from the divine presence. Meanwhile, in Islam, liberation can be seen as achieving inner peace through obedience to God's teachings (Banda, 2020).

The journey of liberation, whether in a religious or psychological context, often involves a long and complex process. This may require deep reflection, development of understanding, and changes in attitudes or behavior that support personal or spiritual growth (Banerjee et al., 2023). Liberation involves freedom from internal shackles, in the form of inequality, self-loathing, or addiction, that may prevent individuals from reaching their full potential. So, whether in a religious or psychological context, liberation is a journey towards

deeper well-being, inner freedom, and a deeper meaning in life (Blunt et al., 2022).

C. METHODS

This research is qualitative descriptive research (Sugiyono 2018:1). This research uses the library research approach. Primary data sources are the concept and study regarding sacrifice, happiness, and liberation according to the Buddhist perspective. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are supporting data in data analysis. Data analysis in this research is composed of 1) Interpretation, which is the understanding of the concept of sacrifice, happiness, and liberation sourced from the holy scripture of the Buddhist religion; 2) Induction and Deduction, which is studying and analyzing all parts and all concepts one by one and their relationship with each other (induction), so that a synthesized understanding can be built. On the other hand, the deduction is the understanding of the vision and overarching style that dominates the book with good comprehension; and 3) Personal Researcher Reflection, which is the formation of a personal concept about sacrifice, happiness, and liberation based on the results of the analysis that has been done or inspired from the primary source.

D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Sacrifice in Buddhism

The Buddhist religion is familiar with the tradition of sacrifices or offerings. Sacrifices are an act of giving something to a different party or a party of higher stature. This tradition of sacrifice or offerings during the time of the Buddha is given by the Buddhist people to members of the Sangha, or the Buddha. These offerings are done to show respect, and devotion, and practice the teachings in the form of giving (*dana*) (Gil-Gimeno & Sánchez Capdequí, 2021). According to Kaharuddin, there are three types of *dana*, which are 1) giving objects (*āmisā-dāna*); 2) giving by providing knowledge or wisdom (*dhamma-dāna*); and 3) giving in the form of sacrifice that saves the safety or life of another living creature (*abhaya-dāna*). The Buddha explained more about reverence and tribute in the Book of *Sutta Nipata*. In *Mahamanggala Sutta* about the main blessings one can receive, it's explained that giving respect to those that deserve to be given respect is one of the main blessings (*Pujaneyyapūja*) that must be done by Buddha's disciples.



The way to pay respect to those who deserve to be respected can be done in several ways. The Book of *Sutta Nipata* explains the different methods of giving respect, which are: Giving praises, greetings, or pleasing words; Giving or welcoming with food and drink; Giving offerings in the form of objects or other material items; Kneeling; *Anjali* or cupping together palms; Bowing deeply with wholeheartedness; and performing all teachings and wisdom that has been given to themselves with vigor and earnestness. In the Book of *Āṅguttara Nikāya*, it is explained that paying respects to those who deserve to be respected can be done by serving and taking care of the respected persons well.

Parties determined to be worthy of being respected consist of the Buddha, members of the Sangha, parents, teachers, fellow family, and other creatures that are worthy of respect, such as the gods in the heavenly realms. Buddhism recognizes other realms of existence other than the human realm (Smith, 2021). Realms of existence aren't only limited to the human realm but also include other lower realms, such as animals, hell, spirits, giants, and other higher realms, such as human and godly realms. Creatures that exist on one of the 31 planes or realms of existence will still experience birth, happiness, suffering, and death. Information about these planes of existence is further delved into in the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, where it is explained that the realm of the living is composed of thirty-one (31) planes that are lived in by creatures according to their karma. These planes of existence consist of 11 *Kāma-bhūmi* (humans are included here), 16 *Rūpa-bhūmi* or the realm of the gods that still have a form, and 4 *Arūpa-bhūmi* or the realm of the gods that no longer have a form. The creatures that live in these planes prove that there is a possibility for linkage and communication between different dimensions. Some humans have powerful abilities or *abhinnā* that enable them to see spiritual realms and even patterns of rebirth (*dibbacakkhu-nāna*). This ability or power is a result of *samatha-bhāvanā* meditation, also known as spiritual calm meditation, whether in this life or a past life.

This tradition of providing offerings or sacrifices to the gods or to creatures that are in higher planes of existence is a form of devotion or respect to a higher being. Humans give their respects to the majesty, purity, and wisdom possessed by the gods. The gods are just and worthy of respect, and to be imitated by humans

because of their wisdom, universal love, and high spiritual purity (Martin, 2022). Based on that, according to the Book of *Sutta Nipata*, in *Mahamāṅgala Sutta (Pujaṇeyyapūja)*, then it can be confirmed that gods are creatures deserving to be respected. However, a problem has occurred in society. The meaning of giving reverence and respect has shifted into a concept of asking or requesting something from the gods. This mindset of the people is what must be corrected, as giving reverence to a higher being that is worthy of it is a form of correct devotion, but it should not be mistaken or even diverted into blind worship or even cult-like behavior.

The traditions that developed during the age of the Buddha are not separate from the living traditions that developed in India before Buddha Gautama spread his teachings. Said traditions continued to affect the life of human society during that time. For example is the existence of worship ceremonies that sacrifice a living creature, fire worship ceremonies, etc.

The Buddha has explained sacrifices according to his teachings in the Book of *Angguttara-Nikaya*, as cited in the following quote: “I do not praise all sacrifices, Brahman, I also do not reject praise on all sacrifices. (1) I do not praise cruel sacrifices where livestock, goats, sheep, chickens, and pigs are slaughtered, where creatures are herded to slaughter. (2) For what reason? Because the *Arahat* and those that have entered The Way into *Arahat* do not conduct such ruthless sacrifices. (3) “But I praise sacrifices without cruelty where livestock, goats, sheep, chickens, and pigs are not killed, where creatures are not slaughtered, which are normal gifts, like that of sacrifices in common family habits. (4) For what reason? Because the *Arahat* and those that have entered The Way into *Arahat* conduct sacrifices without ruthlessness”.

From the quote, we can infer that the Buddha does not oppose or judge those who conduct sacrifices by sacrificing living beings because the Buddha does not force his teachings upon others. All parties have their own beliefs with their backgrounds and consequences that must be accepted. The Buddha only approves or suggests and accepts sacrifices in the form of normal offerings like that of family habits. In other words, the Buddha only accepts sacrifices or offerings without the killing of living creatures, or food offerings that are not the result of the murder of a living creature. This is the type of sacrifice done by the noble, wise men. Those who



are wise should present offerings or sacrifices in this way because it will bring seeds of happiness. The gods will provide abundant blessings to those who conduct their offerings in this way.

Buddhism does not agree with offerings that sacrifice living beings. This can be explained by how the act of killing a living creature is a violation of the first Buddhist *Pancasila*, which is *Pāṇatipātā Veramaṇi*. Killing living creatures for any reason, based upon a conscious intent to kill will result in negative karma in the form of future suffering. The Buddha explained in the Book of *Dhammapada*, that someone who seeks happiness for himself by hurting other creatures that also want happiness, then after death, will not find happiness. The opposite is true for those who seek happiness for themselves by not hurting other creatures that also wish for happiness, as then after death they will receive happiness. The excerpt from the Book of *Dhammapada* can be explained by how living creatures, like animals, also have a desire to be happy, just like how humans have a desire to be happy, receive meals, protect their young, etc. Animals are also creatures brought into existence by The Creator just like humans, hence humans should love each other and protect each other, unless there is a relationship between the two that can be considered dangerous to one or the other.

2. Happiness in Buddhism

One of human life's purposes is to be happy. In the perspective of Buddhism, happiness can be differentiated into two. The Book of *Angutara-Nikaya* explains that these two types of happiness are worldly happiness (*sāmisam sukham*) and spiritual happiness (*nirāmisam sukham*) (Bentley, 2023). Wijaya explains that worldly happiness is attained when sensual desires are fulfilled. This is related to attachments and tends to hide sadness or suffering. Worldly happiness is impermanent and, hence will cause unsatisfaction, sadness, or suffering when the time comes. Said type of happiness causes humans to drown in *samsara*, which is the flow of birth and death. On the other hand, spiritual happiness is happiness that removes sensual desires (low desires). Spiritual happiness is attained through maintaining and developing purity and positive thoughts, causing the spirit to be calm and tranquil. Spiritual happiness makes it possible for humans to achieve liberation from suffering.

The Book of *Dhammapada* explains that spiritual happiness or the achievement of liberation in the form of *Nibbana* is the highest form of happiness. Some forms of worldly happiness are better than others, such as health as the best fortune, satisfaction as the most valuable thing, and trust as the best cousin. Regardless, it should be remembered that worldly happiness is still temporary (Barclay, 2021).

The Book of *Dhammapada* explains that thoughts are the pioneers of all things, in other words, thoughts are the leader. If anyone speaks or acts with good thoughts, then happiness will follow. The opposite is true for those who speak and act with evil thoughts, then suffering will follow. Bodhi explains that thoughts are the source that provides a basis for good and evil, and actions that flow from thoughts, create the fundamental cause for suffering and happiness. Happiness will be attained by exploring the roots of suffering, and it can be found that happiness is up to each one of our wills. The Buddha has shown that the key to happiness is practice and mastery of the mind (Marques, 2021). Buddha has said that there is nothing more directed towards danger and suffering than a mind that isn't developing, isn't being practiced, wild, unsupervised, unprotected, and uncontrolled; Vice versa, there is nothing more directed towards great benefit and happiness than a mind that has developed, is practiced, tame, supervised, protected and controlled. This is the core of the Buddha's teachings, the development and practice of the mind. The results of this practice will reveal intrinsic enlightenment and finally arrive at the happiness of liberation or liberation.

3. Liberation in Buddhism

Enlightenment or liberation in Buddhism is referred to as the term *Nibbana*, which is the end destination for Buddhists. According to Wijaya, enlightenment is a realization or achievement, not an inspiration, dream, or revelation. Additionally, humans do not achieve enlightenment because of a power beyond themselves. Instead, it is built from the development of human conscience (Grunwald, 2021). Even though there are three types of enlightenment, which are *Sravaka-Bodhi*, *Pratyeka-Bodhi*, and *Samyak-Sambodhi*, they are the same in essentially on the same path. In analogy, enlightenment is liberation from misleading delusions. At its base, all humans have the potential to achieve enlightenment but are hindered by pseudo-feeling



fantasies, like a sun being blocked by the clouds. This is why enlightenment isn't an achievement where someone achieves something new. When enlightened, a human is only freed by removing the clouds that cover their mind's eye, hence they can see the true or essence of absolute truth.

A human's inner character will always follow phenomena that are intercepted by the senses. Whether good or bad, these phenomena will affect the human mind through emotions of happiness, sadness, suffering, anger, anxiety, torture, and so on. The human mind is vacillated by ever-changing emotions that never stop, hence it can be said that suffering or happiness is sourced from the mind because the mind is the leader (Skjuve et al., 2022). How do humans address this issue? How can humans leave this oscillating pseudo-feeling and achieve true happiness?

In the Book of *Dhammapada*, the Buddha explains that the way to reach freedom is awareness because the spiritual self that isn't aware will die, and in turn, those whose spiritual self is off guard will be akin to that of the dead, even if they are still alive. Humans who have awareness will be wise, persevere in meditation, live enthusiastically, and will always do things wholeheartedly and will eventually reach *Nibbana* (absolute freedom).

There is a quote in the Book of *Dhammapada* that goes as follows: "O, brahman, put effort into cutting the flow of desires and remove appetite for the senses. After realizing the destruction of all conditioned things, O brahman, you will realize *Nibbana*, 'That Which is Not Created.'" Humans must put in their effort into controlling their thoughts, and their desire for low passions that bring down morals. Humans must practice their minds with good things. A way to practice the mind is through meditation or *samadhi*. Next, the Book of *Dhammapada* explains that it is not only moral principles and determination, or plenty of learning, or developments in *samadhi*, neither staying in a remote location that causes someone to think to enjoy happiness from a liberation that cannot be achieved by worldly people. One must not feel satisfied before one reaches the destruction of all inner spiritual dirt (*Nibbana*).

The path that leads to enlightenment is the middle path, or the eightfold noble path (*Atthaṅgika-manga*), which is conducted systematically through steps of understanding or pañña, moral principles or morality,

and *samādhi* or meditation. Epistemologically, the three categories of knowledge must be done in three learning methods to achieve a well-rounded understanding. The first step is to learn the knowledge cognitively (*pariyatti*), the next is to investigate and practice the teachings (*patipatti*), and the third step is done by analyzing and reflecting on life's events through vipassanā-bhavanā meditation (*pativedha*), henceforth they will reach absolute liberation (*Nibbana*).

Enlightenment is explained in the holy books as the achievement of wisdom and holiness. Wijaya explains that enlightenment happens because there is a breakthrough in teachings (*pativedha*), that is differentiated into four categories based on the level of holiness. These levels of holiness are *Sotāpanna*, *Sakadāgāmi*, *Anāgāmi*, and *Arahanta*, the highest level of holiness (Min et al., 2023). These levels of holiness measure how far along someone is in letting go or destroying spiritual burdens (*saṃyojana*) that are composed of ten spiritual burdens. The Book of Vibhaṅga explains that the ten spiritual burdens (*saṃyojana*) are composed of 1) *Sakkāyadiṭṭhi* or belief that there is an existence of the self that is immortal and separate; 2) *Vicikicchā* or doubt the Holiness Buddha Gautama and His teachings; 3) *Silabbataparāmaṣa* or attachments to habits and rituals/practices that deviate; 4) *Kāmarāga* or the desire towards sensual happiness; 5) *Paṭigha* or hate, grudges, and evil desires; 6) *Rūparāga* or the desire to live in a materialized spiritual realm (*Rūpa-bhumi*); 7) *Arūparāga* or the desire to live in an unmaterialized spiritual realm (*Arūpa-bhumi*); 8) *Māna* or pomposity or arrogance; 9) *Uddhacca* or anxiety; and 10) *Avijjā* or spiritual stupidity or darkened spirits. Liberation or freedom can be achieved by anyone who can destroy these spiritual burdens, whether male or female and old or young.

The level of holiness *Sotāpanna* or those who have entered the path to *Nibbāna* are those who have let go of three spiritual burdens. These three spiritual burdens are the belief that there is a self that is immortal and separate, doubt towards His Holiness Buddha Gautama and His teachings, and attachments to habits and rituals/practices that deviate from the teachings. Someone who has reached *Sotāpanna* will be reborn again for seven lives while they reach *Nibbāna*. The level of holiness *Sakadāgāmi* or those who have returned once more are those that have destroyed three spiritual burdens



and weakened two spiritual burdens. These two spiritual burdens are desires towards sensual happiness and hate, grudges, and evil desires. *Anāgāmi* or those who will not be reborn again are those who have destroyed five spiritual burdens. An *Anāgāmi* will reside in a heavenly realm and will reach liberation in that realm. On the other hand, *Arahanta* is the highest form of holy achievement. *Arahanta* is the group of students that have destroyed all (ten) spiritual burdens. The life that they live now will be their last life because, after the destruction of the physical body, they will not be reborn again. In other words, someone who has reached *Arahanta* has reached the liberation of *Nibbāna*. After the body is destroyed, then all that will be is *Nir*/emptiness/liberation from *samsara*. Boniran and Hendra's research analyzed sacrifice from the perspective of *Kutadanta Sutta*. Analysis with ethics as a good moral ground regarding how to conduct sacrifices correctly according to *Kutadanta Sutta* are sacrifices that do not kill living creatures. Meanwhile, this research analyzes sacrifices with more in-depth comprehension. Regarding the background during the Buddha's time, it can be seen in the study of the Book of *Sutta Nipata*, and the Book of *Anggutara-Nikaya*. The essence of sacrifices can be analyzed in the Book of *Dhammapada*. Next is the analysis regarding the relationship between sacrifice, happiness, and the achievement of true liberation (*Nibbāna*), based on the Book of *Digha-Nikāya*, and the Book of *Vibhaṅga*. From the analysis, it can be concluded that the sacrifice or offering through the killing of a living creature will not bring human happiness. Killing living creatures for any reason violates the first Buddhist *Pancasila*, *Pāṇatipātā Veramaṇi*. Sacrificial ceremonies that kill living creatures are considered to be a deviating practice from Buddhist teachings, as it's considered a spiritual burden or (*saṃyojana*) of the third degree, which is *Silabbataparāmāsa*. Spiritual burdens are hindrances to the effort to achieve liberation. Spiritual burdens must be destroyed or erased so that the efforts to reach the first level of holiness, which is *Sotāpanna* can be achieved. It's followed by the reaching of the next levels of holiness, which are *Sakadāgāmi*, *Anāgāmi*, and *Arahanta*, and as the peak, achieving the highest form of liberation/happiness which is *Nibbāna*.

E. CONCLUSION

The Book of *Anggutara-Nikaya* explains that the Buddha does not oppose or judge those who conduct sacrifices by sacrificing living beings because the Buddha never forces teachings upon other parties. Every side has their own beliefs with their backgrounds and all forms of consequences that must be accepted. Buddha only praises and accepts sacrifices or offerings like that of family habits, which are sacrifices without the killing of living beings. The Book of *Dhammapada* explains that someone who is seeking happiness for himself by torturing other creatures that also desire happiness, then after death he will not attain happiness. Sacrificial ceremonies that sacrifice living beings will not bring happiness to humans. Killing living creatures is a violation of the first Buddhist *Pancasila*, *Pāṇatipātā Veramaṇi*. Ceremonies that sacrifice living creatures is a spiritual burden (*saṃyojana*) of the third degree, which is *Silabbataparāmāsa*. *Samyonaja* or spiritual burdens are a hindrance or roadblock to spiritual improvement to achieve *Nibbāna*. *Samyonaja* or spiritual burdens must be erased to achieve liberation.

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