CHAPTER-8
CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the researcher addresses to present the Buddhist philosophy for alleviation the down-trodden. The present thesis has been divided into eight chapters. In Chapter-1, introductory and methodology chapter, the researcher has initially given the introduction to the Indian society based on Caste structure and Characteristics in addition with the review of Buddhist literature.

This study throws sufficient light upon the ethical features of the Buddhism and Hinduism in Indian Society from the different perspectives for better understanding of the tradition existing in several countries. Since the thesis is a literature review-based research therefore, its outcome might be a complete and compact account of the both traditions. It may encourage the readers to have a better insight of the ethical life of layman, monks and their monasteries. However, from the practical point of view, it makes clear that the moral life is good for the humanity. The present problems of the world can be resolved by the practice of moral rules. The moral rules help to get mental peace, happiness, and prestige not only the agent of an action but the other persons too. Moreover, the outcome of the thesis may encourage the new scholars for further research and turn out to be a reference material for the scholars and budding scholars of Buddhism and Hinduism in Indian Society.

Ethics is one of the most important foundations of human society and religion. It really plays a very indispensable role in the social, political, economic and religious life of human beings. In the history of mankind, society could not flourish and live in harmony without the fundamental ethics and there is no religious system which does not include the moral teachings. The quality and nature of the nation follow from the mettle of the people. Laws cannot impart morality but they can only control external situations. Good intentions promote honesty and bad intentions breed corruption. Proclivity to vice is a natural tendency in human nature. Human dignity is a part of humanity – intrinsic to man.
A person promoting the welfare of humanity can be trusted because he possesses the quality of truth. By aiming at the well-being of society it also aims at the well-being of oneself. No society can be stable without some moral principles. Every religion has laid down rules of conduct for its followers. It is due to the differences in geographical conditions, social background and development of man’s level that the concepts of ethics such as morality, virtue, equality, right, etc., or criteria of social ethics vary from society to society. Nowadays, ethics is applied not only in the sphere of human behavior and conduct, but also has stretched out its arms to every sphere of natural and social sciences as well.

As regards the scope of research, both Buddhism and Hinduism have a very rich literature, which have become plentiful and more complicated in due course of time. A comprehensive study of the literature and philosophy of these two systems is actually very cumbersome task for the researcher. Keeping in mind the limitation of time and availability of source materials, the researcher, therefore, would like to confine the work to the Life Sketch of Buddha, Buddhism Philosophy, Some comparisons between Hinduism and Buddhism, Relevance of Buddhism in present day. In this research work, therefore, the ethical concepts particularly taking in mind in the light of current moral problems will be examined and analyzed. Criterions for judging the moral and the highest virtue or the highest goal of life of Buddha are discussed in the thesis.

In the light of comparative studies the main aim is to compare the origin, structure, and characteristics of two major religions of the world, with the view of determining their genuine agreements and differences, the measure of relation in which they stand one to another, and their relative superiority or inferiority when regarded as types. Setting two religions side by side, it is compelled to believe that one of them is better than the other; but, the usual tests having been applied, the verdict which it renders is relative merely, not absolute. It does not undertake to say that either religion is —the best, for even the —better of the two may manifestly be very defective. Hence additional facts are constantly sought for the knowledge of the origin, nature, and laws of religion in the present inquiry. The
special field of comparative religion strives to determine the relation of the two
religions of mankind to one another, and the mutual relation of conceptions
current within a single religion, but at different periods in its history. Moreover,
comparative religion seeks to determine the relation of two religions alike to a
common fundamental instinct in man.

In this thesis, the task is not to emphasize upon the data-collection or its
mere elaboration in a descriptive manner, but to work out a comparative study of
the two systems i.e. Buddhism and Hinduism. While doing the study on the topic
several methods of Social Science research such as analytical method, historical
method, critical method and especially comparative method are utilized.
Footnotes and references are produced in the entire thesis at required place. In
brief, the following are the parts of the methodology of my research:

1. Collecting the relevant and adequate material for the thorough study of ethics
   in Buddhism and Hinduism in Indian Society from different sources.
2. Having the required ideas and references for thesis writing in the consistent
   manner.
3. Discussing the doubtful points with the supervisor and persons having
   adequate knowledge of the subject matter.
4. Writing thesis in accordance with the proposed topic and getting it corrected
   by the supervisor.

The Chapter-2 gives the details of the historical background of Indian
society including the Hindu and Buddhism way of life in addition with the some
traditional concepts descriptions. From the historical point of view, the
comparison shows that Buddhism and Hinduism emerged from the different
background. The very fact that there are numerous sects and variations within
both Hinduism and Buddhism show that there are many ways to find religious
expression. Even the Hindus that are atheists at least hold a religious world view;
albeit not one that includes a single supreme being. Gautama Siddhārtha was
raised as a Hindu, but was discouraged by what he felt were limitations of or
dogma within Hinduism. Chronicles of the Buddha reveal their different way of
life as well as their different contribution to the society they lived in. From the
early history till now the two traditions developed in different ways along with the great works of literature and partition of various schools and sects. Buddhists believe that life on earth is a revolving wheel of pain. Man must go through a series of life and rebirth until he attains Enlightenment. The ultimate goal is to attain Nibbāna, or freedom from the birth, death cycles. The Buddhist’s life of humble existence is to escape the miseries of life on earth.

By way of concluding the discussion of purusharthas in this Chapter, let us salute our National Flag, the distinctive symbol of our country and culture. For, besides being the symbol of our freedom, it also signifies the ideals we live for. Since the purusharthas are our ideals, we may be justified in interpreting our National Flag as representing the purusharthas. According to Vexillologists, flags are artifacts expressive of the culture of certain times and places. Ours is a purushartha-culture which our National Flag so colorfully symbolizes. To understand this symbolism, we must look at how our National Flag is designed. It is a horizontal tri-color of deep saffron (Kesari) at the top, pure white in the middle and dark green at the bottom in equal proportion. In the center of the white band is a wheel, in navy blue, which represents charkha (Khadi Spinning Wheel). Its design is that of the wheel (Chakra) which appears on the abacus of the Sarnath Lion Capital of Asoka. The color combination together with the wheel at the center of the flag when flown may be taken as an interpretation of the interrelationship of the various purusharthas and their dynamism. If we take the color of saffron to represent our desire (the instinctive principle in us), then it symbolizes the kama-purushartha. Similarly, if we take green to represent prosperity (the acquisitive principle in us), it symbolizes the artha-purushartha. White is certainly a symbol of purity (the spiritual principle in us) and it can therefore quite easily become a representation of the moksha-purushartha. And finally the wheel, the symbol of order and progress (the guiding principle in us), can be taken as a representation of the dharma-purushartha. If we are right in this interpretation, then our National Flag is indeed a visual statement of how the various purusharthas are integrally related. In fact, no other symbol in our culture has expressed the mutuality and interaction of the four purusharthas better.
Gandhiji’s understanding of the *purusharthas* and of their interrelationship can be taken as a confirmation of our interpretation of the National Flag. For he believed in the fundamental unity of life and he conceived the various purusharthas as involving each other. Given the reciprocity of the purusharthas as Gandhiji saw it, our inherited notions of individualism and saintliness become outdated. Challenging these notions, Gandhiji considered Satya which implies arvodaya as the highest human value. This is in fact evident in our ‘National motto: *SatyamevaJayate*’.

**The Buddhist Theological** enterprise as outlined in *Buddhist Theology* and explored in this article is a demanding one. If we take all of these demands literally, it puts a tremendous burden on academic Buddhist theologians, for over and above religious commitment, an intellectual mastery of the tradition, and a mastery of the norms of traditional and contemporary scholarly discourse that are required to explicate it, it requires of them its (at least partial) internalization.

The Buddhist spiritual life is – in any case – a demanding one and its goal sublime. Given that their aim will be to function as interpreters and communicators of the Buddha-Dharma, it is not surprising that the theologians’ task is a difficult one. Notwithstanding, the potential value of this kind of inquiry is inestimable. Potentially, Buddhist Theology could lead to a thorough sifting of all aspects of Western life and all aspects of the Buddhist tradition with a view to identifying which forms of belief and practice are most likely to foster personal and even social liberation within the context of our historically unique cultural situation. Indeed, ambitious though it is, this kind of inquiry would seem essential if the Buddhist tradition is to survive with spiritual integrity in the twenty-first century.

For the last topic of this chapter the researcher has been discussed about the Indian Society. India has a complex system of stratification based on caste. Caste system has done more damage to Hindu society than the foreign invasions. Critics say that caste system is an integral part of the Hindu religious tradition. Caste system is not a part of the Hindu religious thought. Practice of caste system in any
form, whatsoever, violates the basic tenets of Hindu dharma. Any form of
discrimination based upon race, caste, color, creed or gender is against the inner
spirit of Hindu religion. The caste system is based on ritual purity and impurity of
social groups. However besides caste other forms of stratification like class
linguistic, religion etc. exist in India side by side. The Brahmanical view of the
caste system is the textual view that analyses caste in terms of ritual hierarchy
notions of karma and dharma account the vast diversity of the caste system, caste
ranking and caste....... Therefore it is a theoretical view of the caste system. After
looking at India’s history of discrimination it can maybe be understood why there
is a need for progressive legislation in that country. India is considered to be the
largest working democracy and its efforts to transform an essentially unequal and
hierarchical society into a democratic Republic has lasted well over fifty years and
could continue for a further fifty years or more. Even though the reform of the
caste system began over fifty years ago discriminatory practices still continue
today. Notwithstanding these protective measures taken discrimination against the
dalits still occurs on a wide scale in India. The Chapter has focused on inter alia
on the opportunities and reservation policies that are in place for the people of
India, who form the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. It will also discuss the
effectiveness of the legislation of India with regard to its policies relating to the
advancement of the previously disadvantaged. Looking at India’s more than sixty
years of experience in its affirmative action programmes. Before affirmative
action programmes are dealt with in more detail an understanding of what
affirmative action is and knowledge of some basic concepts is required.

Indispensably, this chapter also gives the details of the Buddhist Social
Order and Rejection of Casteism (Varna). Undoubtedly, Buddhist society at that
time was divided into two distinct classes, though not social classes as we know
them. The former class is Pabbajita, the recluse society or the Sangha; and the
latter is Gahatta-lay society. The lay society is always larger than the recluse
society.
The Chapter -3 deals with the detailed account of Life sketch of Goutham Buddha and finally he had some Reflections on the Buddha’s life.

We will probably never know to what extent our understanding of the Buddha’s Life is historically accurate. No biography was written during or near his lifetime. Most of the details just recounted are found in the Sutta Pitaka, but some appear only later. Moreover, these texts are the product of an oral tradition lasting several generations before they were written down, and they include obvious fabrications. My favourite tells us that at birth Siddhartha walked north seven steps, surveyed the world, and declared: ‘I am the highest in the world; I am the best in the world; I am the foremost in the world. This is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being for me’. And you think your child is precocious.

We do not even know in which centuries the Buddha lived. Everyone seems to agree that his life lasted eighty years, but there is considerable disagreement about the date of his birth. Dates ranging from the late seventh to the late fifth centuries BCE have been proposed. Most Western scholars think he was born somewhere around 500 BCE. If this were correct, then the Buddha would have lived most of his life in the fifth century BCE. This would mean he lived many centuries after Abraham, around the same time as Confucius, about a century before Socrates, five centuries before Jesus, and eleven centuries before Muhammad. For simplicity, it will be convenient to remember that the Buddha lived approximately 2,500 years before us.

For our purposes, these issues do not matter much. Whatever the precise details of the Buddha’s life, there is broad agreement about its general outline, and it is this life – the life that has been passed down through generations of Buddhists – that is important. For it is this life that is a constitutive part of the teaching of the Buddha as we know it, and it is about this life that we are invited to reflect.

The life of the Buddha might be described in a variety of ways – as a story about someone who lost his mother at birth, who abandoned his wife and child, who rebelled against his father, who forsook worldly for spiritual power, and so on. From these perspectives, there are many questions stream-observers might ask
about the Buddha. How did the death of his mother affect him? Were there other perhaps less noble motivations in leaving home? Did he yearn for his wife and child during his long search for enlightenment? Did he ever seek reconciliation with his father? From a personal standpoint, these questions appear especially interesting and important. But they are not the questions the traditional story primarily is meant to raise. This is not because our answers could only be speculative (which is mostly true), but because the story is intended to speak to us in universal terms that do not depend on the specifics of particular personal relationships.

What is important, we are supposed to believe, is that the Buddha had virtually all those things most people seek and suppose will bring them happiness – good looks, wealth, power, prestige, a fruitful marriage, and so on – and he realized that, in fact, these things were insufficient for real happiness. No matter how successful we are in pursuing these apparent goods, it remains the case that each of us will grow old, become ill, and die (unless we die sooner from accidents, natural disasters, or acts of violence). Old age, illness, and death are basic facts of life, and they appear to be inevitable sources of suffering for each of us and for those we love. The Buddha saw this as emblematic of a more general truth: that the goods most persons devote their energies to acquiring are impermanent and so are not by themselves genuine sources of happiness. Hence he looked elsewhere. This is one meaning of his ‘great renunciation,’ his departure from home and family to seek enlightenment.

After a long and arduous struggle, the Buddha believed he discovered that true happiness is achieved precisely where we might think it least likely to be found – in freedom from craving, clinging, and attachment to what we desire. The state of non-attachment is the primary fruit of enlightenment. It is the promised culmination of a difficult and complex journey, an intellectual, moral, and meditative undertaking – the Eightfold Path – that, successfully completed, releases two powerful forces within us: compassion for other living beings and joyful appreciation of each moment of our lives irrespective of what happens to
us. These forces have a latent presence in each of us, the Buddha taught, but for most of us, because of our attachments, they manifest themselves only weakly and sporadically. Still, by attaining the state of non-attachment, compassion and joy are made available to each of us, and with these comes tranquillity, the mark of genuine happiness. This is one meaning of the Buddha’s life of homelessness: real happiness is to be found not in the fulfilment of our conventional pursuits, but in a fundamental reorientation of our attitudes towards those pursuits – that is, in freedom from the craving and attachment typically associated with our desires for success.

No doubt stream-observers noticed that, in the end, the Buddha grew old, got sick, and died. He did not purport to have found a way to eliminate these sources of suffering in life as we know it. He did not announce the discovery of a fountain of youth. Rather, he proclaimed that full enlightenment would enable us to achieve happiness in this life despite aging, sickness, and death, and that it would release us from the cycle of rebirth into similar lives so as to attain another form of being free from all suffering. Though it is said to be beyond adequate description in our language, *Nibbana* is a state we can achieve while living this life as well as one beyond life as we ordinarily know it.

This is the central message the life of the Buddha is meant to convey: true happiness may be achieved not by gaining what we seek to possess, but by cultivating a state of non-attachment with regard to our desires. This is the message we are meant to apply to our own lives. It is at once powerful and perplexing, powerful because it offers a road to well-being immune to vicissitudes we all recognize, and perplexing – for many, I suspect – for a variety of psychological and philosophical reasons. The Buddha encouraged his followers to understand his teaching for them. Stream-observers can do this only by confronting what perplexes them and reflecting on the extent to which this teaching has resources to resolve their concerns. *It is thus appropriate to close this chapter by considering one question directly raised by the story of the Buddha’s life.*
In the Chapter-4, the researcher discusses on the Buddhism Philosophy. In this chapter I have given the brief descriptions of Buddhist thoughts pertaining to the Buddhism traditions in the society. The Buddha appreciated democratic practices and taught the means to develop equality of status, civil rights and justice within society. As people develop greed, hatred and mental delusion more and more, social morality has declined alarmingly. It would be unfair to lay blame on any individual or group alone, we all have to be responsible and start practicing the principles of justice here and now.

The main cause of all the problems is the human mind; the impure or wicked mind is the creator of all the world’s crimes, violence and undesirable situations. So it is necessary for us to practice the Buddha’s main teachings of not harming any living being, doing good and purifying our minds through the practice of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. The Buddha said:-

“Hatreds never cease through hatred in this world; through love alone they cease. This is an eternal law.”

What humanity needs today is not hatred or anger, but loving-kindness, Compassion, sympathetic-joy and equanimity, so that every living being in the world can live happily and harmoniously enjoying fully their rights, social justice and human dignity. The Bodhisattva, who has proper understanding and right vision, is capable to solve the problems because of his altruistic nature. He can understand the real nature of the problems of the globalized world. The interactions among human beings and also between human beings and other beings are quite essential. In fact, by amalgamation of culture, idea, thought, knowledge, economy etc. of various countries into the global environment, comprehensive and expansive interactions with various countries and many people are possible. In this way we will be able to understand the urges of others, their culture, civilization, and their needs where they are lacking. Thus, understanding the needs of the people we can extend the support for their alleviation of pain by way of satisfying their needs.
The teachings of ‘‘Perfection of ethics’’, guide us proper path to face the problems provided by present system. Perfection means to become perfect in performance of the actions. Santideva suggests practical application of the core concept of Buddhist ethics “merely talking about teachings is not sufficient so I will act bodily; kayenaiva pathisyami vakpathena tu kim bhavet?”. Thus, it is most suitable and perfect solution to the present age challenges. If we work with proper understanding combining the ethical conduct with performance of action, it will reflect the essence of globalization. The Buddhist ethics has ability to understand the nature of the world through its quality of wisdom. This is the reason that the Buddhism has developed and influenced the world since its origin till today. And, it is still has the capacity to influence through its qualities to bring happiness in the universe. The most striking challenge of present global system is the economic imbalance. The selfless attitude of the enlightened being is the model path, which can play very important role in our work performance if it comes into every day affairs. We must work not only for the sake of ourselves but for the interest of all sentient beings. This attitude guides us that while we work (at our work place), we must care about the sentiments of our colleagues, other employees and of clients. We must always be ready to help others whenever and wherever needed by giving time, cooperation, sympathy in strenuous situation with friendly relation and so on. Our attitude and behaviour must not discourage, disregard and misguide others. The perfection of generosity, if practiced properly, then the world may become with less sufferings and more pleasure. Further, in this context, the examination of the ethical principles reveals that one must properly understand his duties. If one understands real nature of his own duty, it leads to the way to happiness.

Therefore, concerning present global scenario, it is important that the present system must be linked with the ethical norms of Bodhisattva to prevent the various kinds of evils prevailing in every field of the present system. The ethics is also needed in order to have proper, healthy, supporting, profitable and faithful business. In the ethical administration, it is also essential to be an integration of ethical governance, employee engagement, performance and well-
being and financial objectives in order to have truly healthy, sustainable, beneficial and trustworthy businesses. According to the Buddhists philosophy, life on earth is suffering and man must always be preparing himself for liberation from this cycle of life and rebirth.

In general, Buddhism shares the idea of the second side. One of the major characteristics of Buddhist philosophy is its naturalistic feature. Being naturalistic in this context means truths are out there in nature, not in human imagination. So, in exploring truths, Buddhism explores nature. In the case of personhood, what is explored by Buddhism is the nature of human being. This leads to the questions concerning the basic concepts of human life such as: what is the meaning of person according to Buddhism; when personhood occurs; what should be counted as the violation of personhood.

Also, Buddhism recognises 31 worlds of existence of which 26 are heavens, four are hells and one is our earth. The 26 heavens are also collectively called Sagga( Sanskrit Swarga). These worlds are aligned to our mental states and we have the ability to visit them or experience them in meditation. However, Buddhist are ware as are Hindus, the heavenly life is not a desirable end since it does not free one from suffering and rebirth. Hence, one should rather strive to attain Nirvana or Moksha, which is the highest and the ultimate goal for the humans to achieve.

Ambedkar’s proposals for Hinduism, although they conflict with the Western conception of “religious freedom”, reflect his modern and humanistic values with respect to religion as a practice. They are linked to his belief that “religion was made for man” and betray a skeptical analysis of unjust power structures. The Hindu Code Bill, which changed the nature of the state’s relationship with Hinduism, the Constitution, which promoted social justice, and the structure of the Buddhist movement he initiated at the end of Ambedkar’s life reflect elements of the reforms he laid down here.

Still, would Ambedkar really have expected reform-minded Hindus to pick up on his line of argument and begin pressing for complete government control
over their own religion? Given the tone of his message, I do not believe that he thought anything of the sort. Perhaps he purposefully exaggerated the extent to which his reforms would have to be enforced in order to demonstrate how hopeless the situation was for Dalits. By the time this speech was made, Ambedkar had already given up on satyagraha as a means of social change, burned the Manusmriti, and quarreled with Gandhi over the subject of Untouchability. He seems to express a personal scepticism in the possibility for meaningful internal change when he ends his speech by saying, “I will not be with you. I have decided to change.” Rather than preparing for battle, he is already bowing out of the discussion. If he could have conceived of a more reasonable approach to Hindu reform, he more likely would already have begun pushing for that reform himself in the public sphere, rather than offering it as a suggestion to others. Instead, I believe that Ambedkar used this list of reforms as a rhetorical device to accurately summarize the insurmountable extent of the caste problem in Hinduism.

In the Chapter-5 of the thesis, we have detailed account of the comparative study between Hinduism and Buddhism in Indian Society. We have summarised the some observations and conclusions.

Hinduism and Buddhism, two contrasting religions born on the Indian soil, have for centuries grown side by side, like a brother and a sister. As Buddhism was carved out of its elder sister, the two share central elements while being radically different on some. This chapter will seek to provide a comparative analysis of these religions, showing at once how they are parallel and yet disjointed.

The very fact that there are numerous sects and variations within both Hinduism and Buddhism show that there are many ways to find religious expression. Even the Hindus that are atheists at least hold a religious world view; albeit not one that includes a single supreme being. Gautama Siddhārtha was raised as a Hindu, but was discouraged by what he felt were limitations of or dogma within Hinduism. He forged a different path and those that followed him and the preaching of his Dhārma (i.e., his doctrine) for the 45 years of his ministry eventually identified his way as a different religion, not just as a sect of Hinduism.
One may, at first thought, believe that Buddhism and Hinduism are so similar as to be the same philosophy or religion, as you will; however, this is not the case, while there are many similarities, there are just as many differences. Buddhism and Hinduism both originated in India and advanced on Indian soil, at least in the early decades of their evolution. Buddhism did not have any texts until many years following Buddha’s death; Buddha’s teachings were passed down for centuries by word of mouth only, prior to being put to paper. However, Hinduism believed in the Vedas—ancient religious texts. The Vedas text were and are touted to be supreme and sacred much like Christians treasure their bible, regardless of the version preferred. Buddha was India’s Jesus, a prophet of unequalled and unparalleled proportions. Hinduism, on the other hand, cannot be traced back to a single prophet or leader.

It bears telling that both Hinduism and Buddhism have different terminologies for the perfect state of being that man only achieves when he reaches a state of supreme consciousness. Hindus call it Moksha, which marks a break from the inexorable cycle of life, death and reincarnation (Samsara), and Buddhists identify it as Nirvana, the indescribable state of total transcendence that ends human suffering. The two religions have the same end point, but that does not mean that the path they follow is the same. This paper will seek to uncover how these two religious traditions, are inextricably linked in their identification of suffering as the chief cause of human suffering and yet different in the methods they advocate achieving liberation from Samsara.

Of the two religions, Buddhism has the more pragmatic approach in that it clearly outlines the pervasive suffering that characterizes human life and stresses on the need to achieve salvation through Nirvana. Evidence for this comes in the form of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold path, which are an instructional guide on how to escape a life of great suffering. The gaining of salvation through Nirvana is the central tenant on whom Buddhism rests, and this goal of human existence is of such profound significance, that the Buddha discouraged any philosophical questions pertaining to the nature of the Universe and of God.
himself. This “Noble Silence” is an affirmation of the Buddha’s teaching that such pursuits are a deviation from the true path, one whose primary goal is to alleviate human suffering. In stark contrast, not only does Hinduism encourage its followers to inquire about the nature of the Universe, but Hindu scriptures also contain detailed narratives of the nature of Brahmin and the experience of Oneness with God.

Buddhism does not have a personal God, and Buddha clearly outlined that he is not a God. Instead, the relationship between the Buddha and his followers can be more accurately depicted as one between teacher and student. This has led to calls that Buddhism is merely a belief system and does not actually comprise a religion. By merely showing the path towards enlightenment and Nirvana, Buddhism does not merit recognition as a distinct religious tradition. It is instead, just an offshoot of Hinduism, an outburst at the injustices of the caste system and a humanitarian philosophy at best. In contrast, Hinduism has thousands of gods and deities, with some like Krishna and Shiva more important than others. That said, it is worth mentioning that Hindus do believe in One Ultimate Reality, which they identify as Brahman.

Buddhism is primarily a monastic and ascetic religion, with some aspects of theism, borrowed mostly from Hinduism and some aspects of atheism similar to Jainism. Buddhism adapted the theistic practices of Hinduism mostly in the context of its own teachings and for the ultimate purpose of facilitating nirvana through individual effort rather than divine intervention.

While in Hinduism, followers may strive for the four chief aims, namely Dharma, Artha (wealth), Kama (pleasure) and Moksha (liberation), in Buddhism followers aim for only two, namely Dharma (Dhamma) and Moksa (or Nirvana).

In ancient India, the atheists like the Lokayatas, on the other hand, ignored these two and aimed for Artha and Kama. For them, life was a unique opportunity to strive for happiness and death was the Nirvana, the end of all. They found no justification to suffer here and now in the hope of a better life in the next birth or hereafter.
Thus, even in this regard, Buddhism retains its distinct character as a spiritual religion that can be categorized neither as a theistic tradition like Hinduism nor as an atheistic tradition like that of the Carvakas or the Lokayatas. It is a tradition uniquely human, intellectual, practical and rooted in verifiable, perceptual experience.

Buddha himself was born in a traditional Hindu family and in his search for the truth followed Hindu gurus and yogis, before he came to disregard the extreme asceticism that they enjoined. Instead, he called upon his followers to adopt the ‘Middle Path’, which was a break from the extreme form of self denial that Hinduism encouraged. The Middle Path, as the name indicates, endorses a balanced way of life that shuns both extreme asceticism and extreme worldliness. This Way was explained by the venerable Ashin Thitila when he noted,” The Eightfold Path which the Buddha preached in his first sermon is known as the Middle Path because it is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. Optimism tends to over-estimate the conditions of life, whereas pessimism tends to under-estimate them. To plunge on the one hand into the sensual excesses and pleasures of the ordinary worldly life is mean, degrading and useless. On the other hand, extravagant asceticism is also evil and useless. Self-indulgence tends to retard one’s spiritual progress and self-mortification to weaken one’s intellect.”

Buddhism actually began as a protest against the egregious elements of the Hindu society, including the brutality of the caste system. In essence, it was a reform movement that grew out of the corruption and restrictive power structure of Hinduism. The relationship between the two can be likened to that between Catholicism and Protestantism. Therefore, Buddhism was the refined form of Hinduism, not only because it emerged and was shaped by Hindu thought, but also because Buddha structured it in a way that could counteract the rigid caste system of Hinduism. Buddhism, unlike Hinduism, focuses not on the society, but on the individual, thus divorcing religion from the interests of the ruling echelon.

As Buddhism evolved as a response to the inadequacies of its mother religion, it differs sharply in its adoption of the path to eternal salvation. Buddhism
was opposed to the strict and rigid caste system embedded in Hinduism, and thus it offered a ray of hope for millions when it argued that anyone, be it the peasant or the priest, could achieve Nirvana. This differs markedly from the Hindu philosophy that only Brahmans, the upper echelon of the social structure, can attain a state of Moksha. Buddhism, in its own right, became a symbol of liberation for those marginalized by its religious counterpart, as it promised eternal salvation for all, breaking the barriers cemented by the Hindu caste system.

Over time, Buddhism spread into Ceylon and parts of Southeast Asia, also making headway in Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. By the sixth century, it had spread to Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea and Japan. Hinduism, on the other hand, remained largely static and bound to Indian soil. This stunning contrast between the spread of two religions, both of which aim to break the inexorable cycle of life and death, remains the subject of much debate and research. What then explains such a disparity in geographical spread, even when Buddhism is a relatively new religious tradition?

The answer lies in the egalitarian and all encompassing nature of Buddhism as compared to the closed pyramid that symbolizes Hinduism’s stringent adherence to the caste system. Hinduism’s restrictive nature is reflected in the popular belief that one can only be born a Hindu. Buddhism marked a break from this rigidity. The fact that anyone can achieve salvation by following the Eightfold path provided respite from the prejudice inherent in a highly stratified Indian society, in which only the Brahmans could aspire for Moksha. But this alone does not fully explain why Buddhism has flourished while Hinduism floundered. For many people Hinduism comes across as a convoluted religion, one with intricacies that would dumbfound the majority, while Buddhism gains followers owing its practical nature and clear outlining of the right way in the Eightfold Path.

Hinduism is more complex than Buddhism, not only because it is the oldest religion of the world but also because it accommodates hundreds of gods, rituals
and beliefs. A measure of its complexity can be gauged from the fact that Hinduism has no recognized founder, and instead is a collection of customs that evolved over the course of centuries. Buddhism, in stark contrast, has a distinguished founder, Gautama Buddha. Given the sheer scale of Hinduism, it comes as no surprise that it’s followers define it as a way of life, one that encompasses and provides a guideline for every aspect of the human condition.

In Hinduism, the four stages of life, the Ashrama, showcase how Hindus have to perform all their responsibilities and then turn towards solitary confinement for the attaining of Moksha. The believer has to undergo a protracted process of education (The Student Stage) and even experience the joys that come with having a family (The Householder Stage). In contrast, the Buddhist tradition emphasizes that the world is full of sorrow and considers ending the suffering as the fundamental aim of one’s life. One needs to transcend the materialist cravings that come with following the endless whims of the self. Kanamatsu vividly describes this concept of erasing one’s self when he notes, “Our self can realize itself truly only by giving itself away. In giving (Dana), is our truest joy and liberation, for it is uniting ourselves to that extent with the Infinitive. We grow by losing ourselves, by uniting.” Although, Hinduism does also recognize this element of suffering that comes with attachment to material objects (Maya), it tends to dwell more on the bliss that accompanies liberation from Samsara.

Another significant difference between these two religions can be understood through the Hindu concept of Anatman and the Buddhist concept of Anatta. The Upanishads outline the idea of the self, one compatible with Brahman, that is permanent and eternal. The goal of Hinduism is to reach Moksha and thereby attain Oneness with Brahman and bonding with the Supreme Reality. In stark contrast, the Theravada refutes this traditional Hindu belief of the nature of the Self when it argues that since nothing is permanent, there is no self. What we comprehend as reality is just the flow of momentary phenomenon. The Mahayana branch of Buddhism provides the more radical idea of the self, when it denies the reality of both the enduring self and the reality of moments. This in
intimately intertwined with the Buddhist concept of Sunyata or emptiness, whose nature is elucidated in the Heart Sutra,” Hear, O Dharmas”phenomena of existence are marked by emptiness: not arisen, not destroyed, not unclean, not clean not deficient nor fulfilled.”

One of the striking similarities between the two religions lies in the shared recognition of the material world as being superficial and mere delusion. Likewise, both religions concur that attachment to world impedes in the way of eternal salvation. The concept of emptiness (Sunyata), which is unique to Buddhism, clarifies that man’s suffering stems from his misguided notion that all objects that we perceive are independent entities and have substance. Dalia Lama provides us with an explanation of this philosophical theory when he expounds, “According to the theory of emptiness, any belief in an objective reality grounded in the assumption of intrinsic, independent existence is simply untenable. All things and events, whether ‘material’, mental or even abstract concepts like time, are devoid of objective, independent existence.”

Both religions believe in the related concepts of reincarnation and karma. This follows that everyone will be held accountable for his or her actions, and thus karma determines one’s position in the cycle of life and death. The Dhammapada vividly describes this law of cause and effect.” The kind of seed sown will produce that kind of fruit. Those who do good will reap good results. Those who do evil will reap evil results. If you carefully plant a good seed, you will joyfully gather good fruit.” The Upanishadic description of man’s inexorable drive for worldly possessions is echoed in the following description,” Intoxicated by the wine of illusion, rushing about like one possessed by an evil spirit; bitten by the world like one bitten by a great serpent; darkened by passion like the night, he stays under the sway of the Maya.” Both Hinduism and Buddhism recognize that human suffering originates from man’s incessant urge to satisfy his insatiable wants and desires. Only the renunciation of such aspirations and detachment with worldly affairs would help in the attainment of Samsara.
Both, Hinduism and Buddhism, remain firm believers in non violence. Evidence for this comes in the first of the five precepts in Buddhism, which outlines how the followers must avoid killing or harming any other living things. The following verse from Sutta Nipata II, 14, showcases the pacifist nature of Buddhism. “He should not kill a living being, nor cause it to be killed, nor should he incite another to kill. Do not injure any being, either strong or weak in the world.” Violence is not endorsed as a way of resolving conflict in either of the two, although Hinduism does recognizes the concept of a just war whose purpose is to fight oppression and restore equality and righteousness. Buddhists and Hindus alike are known for not killing ants and insects, instead taking them outdoors for safe passage, as opposed to ruthlessly squashing them under one’s feet.

Lord Buddha opposed the Brahmanical social system, their dogmatism and superstition and priesthood. He taught people to exercise reason and not to be led like dumb-cattle. He brought about many-sided advance in the culture and civilization of different countries by his social order and his humanistic movement. Buddha did not limit himself to curing Indian society; his aim was to cure mankind as he sought to deliver man from his bondage. Important Buddhist contribution to Indian and world culture as well, is the idea of social and religious equality. Buddha carried out a vigorous campaign against social discrimination. While in Hindu Caste system is a part of the Hindu religious thought. Practice of caste system in any form, whatsoever, violates the basic tenets of Hindu dharma. Any form of discrimination based upon race, caste, color, creed or gender is against the inner spirit of Hindu religion.

The Chapter-6, we have focuses on the Buddhism and upliftment of Down-trodden from the Indian society. The Indian caste system has played a significant role in shaping the occupations and roles as well as values of Indian society. Religion has been the constant push towards this stratification system for centuries, beginning with the Aryans and continuing down a long road of unfortunate discrimination, segregation, violence, and inequality. Hinduism was
the backbone of the purity pollution complex, and it was the religion that influenced the daily lives and beliefs of the Indian people. Even after sixty-three years of independence, Indians continue to be in the grip of caste consciousness. Historically, India has been surviving as a nation for millennia with closed groups divided by caste, creed and language. Work was divided and each had his allotted task since birth, and heredity of occupation was a rule that played a big role in the economics of urban and rural life. Mobility of occupation or caste was restricted, and an individual leaving the occupation of his ancestors in order to follow his or her own path was rarely witnessed. It can be seen that caste continues to play an important role in the dynamic of social and political interactions within India. However, the relationship between caste and hereditary occupations has become less significant now, and there are fewer restrictions on social interaction among castes, especially in urban areas. The present Indian society is moving from its closed systems towards a state of change and progression marked by the assertion of the human spirit irrespective of castes and creeds. Numerous movements challenging the injustices associated with the caste system have encouraged individuals in India to be more civil towards other caste members. Many of the lower castes have gained a lot from the partial elimination of the caste system, and India should be applauded for its constant effort to eradicate this system of stratification from its culture. It is, however, important to look at the importance of how caste status has affected the quality of life and social mobility in India today.

Ambedkar and Scheduled Castes:

The chapter is also focused on the Ambedkar’s views on the Indian society and his contributions in reforming the casteless society by giving constitution safeguard to untouchables. Ambekdar oscillated between the promotion of the Untouchables in Hindu society or in the Indian nation as a whole. The strategy of a break that could take the form of a separate electorate or of a separate Dalit party and/or of conversion outside Hinduism is to improve the status of scheduled castes. He searched for solutions, explored strategies and in doing so set the Dalits on the path of an arduous emancipation. When he
advocated equality, he referred to equality in the economic, political and social spheres. It was Ambedkar who championed the cause of humanitarianism and tried to minimize the distance between two individuals. His contribution to uplift Scheduled Castes was realistic and lasting. He was largely responsible for creating reserved positions for untouchables in the civil service, legislatures and higher education. His major contribution was to have emphasized the importance of action from below that political organisation was indispensable to securing justice and basic human rights.

The ideas of Ambedkar were still very much relevant today and none can ignore his contributions to the socio-economic development of Indian society. Ambedkar worked for ensuring a classless, casteless and divisionless society and fostering unity amidst diversity. In order to attain the change among the Scheduled Castes, new norms are being evolved and new processes are being initiated for enabling to reach these norms. The Scheduled Castes as a group has not only to shed their inferiority but also to gear up them to adapt to the new order. They have to give up their old traditional occupations and life styles, come out of their shell and learn new skills and ways of life. This requires a great deal of change, both in their personal life, family ethos and group life. The problems of adjustment are thus entirely new and intricate.

In spite of the earnest efforts made by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the consequent efforts of the Central and State Governments to uplift the Scheduled Castes, the status of the Scheduled Castes remained as it was. Yet, there are certain views of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to be implemented for the emancipation of the Scheduled Castes in particular and the amelioration of the weaker sections in general. Thus the dreams of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar are still far from being realized. Despite including several provisions in the Constitution to protect the rights of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, the dream of Dr. Ambedkar to convert India into an egalitarian society as was thought by Buddha, who believed in the three principles, namely, liberty, equality and brotherhood, is yet to be anticipated.
The constitutional commitment of the creation of a classless society be lifting equality and human dignity is sheltered by the rampant practice of untouchability and of bonded labour system. Ambedkar believed in the political process and was only anxious that the Depressed Classes share in it according to then numbers and needs. He believed that democracy offers every individual achieve social equality, economic and political justice guaranteed in the preamble of the constitution. Liberty, equality and fraternity should be the only alternative to abolition caste society. He argued that, liberty cannot be divorced from equality; equality cannot be divorced from fraternity. With equality, liberty would produce would kill individual initiative. Without fraternity, liberty and equality could not become a natural course of things. It would require a constable to enforce them. We must begin by acknowledging the fact that there is completes absence of two things in Indian society. Political democracy gives equal rights for everyone which assures legal provision to all. Ambedkar believed One Man One Value which means the basic need of each person are well satisfied with freedom and dignify.

**Buddhist Social Justification :**

For the last discussion of this chapter, we have presented the final reflection of Lord Buddha towards the social justification. Lord Buddha opposed the *Brahmanical* social system, their dogmatism and superstition and priesthood. He taught people to exercise reason and not to be led like dumb-cattle. He brought about many-sided advance in the culture and civilization of different countries by his social order and his humanistic movement. Buddha did not limit himself to curing Indian society; his aim was to cure mankind as he sought to deliver man from his bondage. Important Buddhist contribution to Indian and world culture as well, is the idea of social and religious equality.

Buddha carried out a vigorous campaign against social discrimination. Throughout Buddhist literature, we find him leading debates and discussions with the *Brahmanas*, always maintaining equal claims of all classes to purity. He declared that the purity of a man does not depend upon his birth, but upon his
actions. He destroyed the fundamental basis of the Brahmanism society. Buddha knew that if all men are equal in suffering, they ought also to be equal in deliverance. He endeavours to teach them to free themselves from disease, old age and death; and, as all beings are exposed to these necessary evils, they all have a right to the teaching, which by enlightening them is to free them. In presence of same type of suffering, he perceives no social distinction; the slave is for him as great as a king’s son. He is stuck, not so much by the abuses and the evils of the society in which he lives, as by those which are inseparable from humanity itself, and it is to the suppression of these that he devotes himself, the others appearing to him very insignificant in comparison.

Although Buddha was a spiritual and moral teacher, and reformer, social, economic political and legal implications do follow from his teachings. He construed every human individual as being divested with certain duties, and the excellence and salvation of individuals depend upon ideal performance of their given duties. In other words, individual rights and dignities are strongly intertwined with corresponding duties. Rather duty is more important than right, and the individual is responsible for the society as well as for himself. Therefore, one has to play one’s role well as one’s internal change, personal perfection and spiritual excellence are primary. The foundation of Buddhist path is the understanding of one’s moral responsibilities towards other. Buddhists never entertained the possibility of limiting man to his physical frame and, thereupon, to one life. Buddha held that each and every man is a potential Buddha, therefore every one must enjoy equal rights and freedom. Only in a free society one can pursue one’s goal. As the goal is same for everyone, as far as the quest for the highest goal is concerned, all are equal. Thus, the concept of social justice is quite in tune of Buddhist Philosophy. Apparently taking a cue to it, the principles of equality, fraternity and liberty are the most important ideals and guidelines in the Constitution of most of the countries across the globe and people are striving to attain this ideal.
Sometimes the Buddha is said to be a social reformer. Among other things, He condemned the caste system, recognized the equality of people, spoke on the need to improve socio-economic conditions, recognized the importance of a more equitable distribution of wealth among the rich and the poor, raised the status of women, recommended the incorporation of humanism in government and administration, and taught that a society should not be run by greed but with consideration and compassion for the people. Despite all these, His contribution to mankind is much greater because He took off at a point which no other social reformer before or ever since had done, that is, by going to the deepest roots of human ill which are found in the human mind. It is only in the human mind that true reform can be affected. Reforms imposed by force upon the external world have a very short life because they have no roots. But those reforms which spring as a result of the transformation of man’s inner consciousness remain rooted. While their branches spread outwards, they draw their nourishment from an unfailing source -- the subconscious imperatives of the life-stream itself. So reforms come about when men’s minds have prepared the way for them, and they live as long as men revitalize them out of their own love of truth, justice and their fellow men.

In the **final Chapter** of the thesis, we have presented the relevance of Buddhism in the modern society. In this chapter we have observed that Social ethics is but one aspect of the Teaching. Its primary concern is the reduction (and, finally, the elimination) of greed, anger, delusion and suffering. But these primary goals naturally and logically lead to a social ethic and one that operates independently of political, theological or doctrinal ideologies. For it works as follows: as men learn to lessen the greed, hatred and egoism that smoulder in their hearts, and as kindness and compassion gain prominence in human motivations, then will men strive to better the world in whatever way their immediate situation affords. For example, it may be food given to a hungry stranger, or it may be participation in a multi-million dollar campaign against world hunger.
Also, in this chapter, the researcher presents applications of ideal governance concept for present administrative offices. Initially, the researcher gives details of the concept of governance and Good Governance. As it has been known, Governance is defined as “the process whereby public institutions conduct public affairs, manage public resources, and guarantee the realization of human rights”. The researcher finds out that definitions of the term refer to the more bureaucratic form of administration such as exists in the democratic nations of the world. This consists of three branches or bureaus of office: the executive, legislative and judicial. In many modern nations, the Legislative is divided into two houses: the Representatives and a Senate.

On this note, people can generally agree on the general concept of governance and public administration and its broad structure. When one further qualifies the term by ‘good’, for example, it means a form or process of governance acceptable to most people of a nation. “Good” is perceived, generally, as a value judgment made by a certain group of people. We shall proceed at this point to examine the concept of “good governance.”

Besides, the researchers refer to the Buddha’s discussion of the importance and the prerequisites of a good government. As it has been known, he showed how the country could become corrupt, degenerate and unhappy when the head of the government becomes corrupt and unjust. He spoke against corruption and how a government should act based on humanitarian principles. Therefore, we may assert that he was perhaps the foremost in establishing a concept of good governance.

While recognizing the usefulness of separating religion from politics and the limitations of political systems in bringing about peace and happiness, there are several aspects of the Buddha’s teaching which have close correspondence to the political arrangements of the present day.

Firstly, the Buddha spoke about the equality of all human beings long before Abraham Lincoln, and that classes and castes are artificial barriers erected by society. The only classification of human beings, according to the Buddha, is
based on the quality of their moral conduct. Secondly, the Buddha encouraged the spirit of social co-operation and active participation in society. This spirit is actively promoted in the political process of modern societies. Thirdly, since no one was appointed as the Buddha’s successor, the members of the Order were to be guided by the Dhamma and Vinaya, or in short, the Rule of Law. Until today every member of the Sangha is to abide by the Rule of Law which governs and guides their conduct.

Fourthly, the Buddha encouraged the spirit of consultation and the democratic process. This is shown within the community of the Order in which all members have the right to decide on matters of general concern. When a serious question arise demanding attention, the issues were put before the monks and discussed in a manner similar to the democratic parliamentary system used today. This self-governing procedure may come as a surprise to many to learn that in the assemblies of Buddhists in India 2,500 years and more ago are to be found the rudiments of the parliamentary practice of the present day. A special officer similar to ‘Mr. Speaker’ was appointed to preserve the dignity of the Parliamentary Chief Whip, was also appointed to see if the quorum was secured. Matters were put forward in the form of a motion which was open to discussion. In some cases it was done once, in others three times, thus anticipating the practice of Parliament in requiring that a bill is read a third time before it becomes law. If the discussion showed a difference of opinion, it was to be settled by the vote of the majority through balloting.

The Buddha discussed the importance and the prerequisites of a good government. He showed how the country could become corrupt, degenerate and unhappy when the head of the government becomes corrupt and unjust. He spoke against corruption and how a government should act based on humanitarian principles.

The Buddha once said, ‘When the ruler of a country is just and good, the ministers become just and good; when the ministers are just and good, the higher officials become just and good; when the higher officials are just and good, the rank and file become just and good; when the rank and file become just and good, the people become just and good.’ (Anguttara Nikaya).
The findings of the study:

The following are the major findings of this study:

- In terms of current problems concerning interpretation and evaluation of Buddha image according to Buddhist Philosophy, it reveals that general people are interested in the miracle power of Buddha image than the practice according to Buddhist philosophy which conceals in it. This wrong interpretation and evaluation results from both internal and external factors, internal factors are social value and social concept which depend on time and social context, external factors are an economic factor, a social factor, a political factor and others.

- For the Socio-economic and political benefits to reach the deprived, the Buddha’s Philosophy serve as a weapon empowering the hands of the social reformers to fight against social injustice and evils in the modern society.

- Ahinsa, as preached and practiced by Buddha, is the only answer to problems of poverty and pollution confronting humanity. Gandhiji rightly stated: “Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man. It is remarkable that unlike Vedic religion, Jainism and Buddhism stands for pure Ahinsa without any condition in India, showed faith that eventually our heart and mind will lean to let go of all obsessive patterns of thought and desire. Then we can awaken to true peace, love, and joy. The fundamental goal of Buddhism is peace, not only peace in India but peace in all over the worlds. The Buddha taught the first step on the path to peace. The Buddhist vision is a world in which all life is sacred, in which selfishness, in the guise of greed, anger and foolishness, does not interfere with the basic interconnectedness of all living beings. That interconnectedness, when freed from the distortion of selfishness, is based upon the potential for enlightenment that every being shares.

- The result of this research reveals the great value of Buddhist philosophy which conceals in Buddha images and a main current problem concerning interpretation and evaluation of Buddha image which affects significantly the perpetuation of Buddhism in Indian society.
Ambedkar upheld that religion which treats a man as human being. According to him, religion is for man and not man for religion. The goal of any religion is to develop man and to teach him how to conduct himself in his relationships with his fellow men. Religions are man-made institutions and therefore, Ambedkar asked his fellow Dalits to accept any religion, which helps them to live as human being with dignity and a new identity. Ambedkar had started his search for a new religion in 1935 when he publicly rejected Hinduism and finally accepted Buddhism on 14th Oct 1956 (D. Ahir, 1968: 135). About 250,000 Mahars from Maharashtra and 3,000,000 Dalits from other parts of India embraced Buddhism following their leader (B. Paradkar, 1972: 66). This change of religion by Ambedkar, along with thousands of Dalit disciples, was a public demonstration of his protest against Brahmanical religion, which upholds values of graded inequality and purity and pollution as the basis of the caste system and untouchability. He would have no compromise with such a system. The Dalits, he claimed, sought a new identity of dignity and social equality in Buddhism, which stood for egalitarian values.

The review of literature reveals the manifold dimensions of deprivations of Dalit men. They are degraded into the level of untouchable objects, but at the same time, a sexually exploited lot. Caste system and its tyranny have contributed a lot into this deprivation process.

The emancipation movement of Dalit men, spearheaded by Dr. B. R. Ambedkar was therefore attacking the very root of this slavery, namely the caste system of Hindu religion. His advocacy of conversion to Buddhism was to liberate the Dalit men from the clutches of caste system. However even after such religious conversion, the economic deprivation of Dalit men has persisted. The pro-active policies of Government of India for economically empower them through reservations and provisions of subsidies are very significant. Nonetheless, most of such economic policies missed the target of actually empowering the Dalit men. One of the reasons for this failure was the imperfect notion of men empowerment. The second reason lies in the process of implementation, which was highly bureaucratic and hence liable to corruption.
How Buddhism stands alone as a system of religious practice. The Buddha was a great and effective Teacher and Physician. He constantly reminded his followers that his only aim was to teach people how to understand the nature of suffering or unsatisfactoriness and how to eradicate it. He promises happiness in this very life for those who follow his noble method with determination and right understanding.

It is very unfortunate that in many existing religions the followers are not encouraged to respect the leaders of another religion. They are warned that if they do so they would be committing a sin and even worse, they would go to hell for it. The Buddha clearly tells us that we must respect those who are worthy of respect. Although we may not agree with certain religious points of view they hold, if they are sincere in their efforts to serve humanity and uplift it, we must respect them for it. There are noble people in every religion.

The Buddha did not advise his disciples to go and convert people who would otherwise go to hell. Rather he advised them to show the world what is right and what is wrong and to be good and to do well, to encourage men to come and see for themselves the truth that he taught.

Buddhism is unique because we can talk about this “religion” even without any reference to **heaven or hell**. I am sure that others cannot talk about religion in this way.

The Buddha’s message of goodwill and understanding to all beings is a universal message. The world today needs this noble message more than ever before in the history of humankind.

Buddhism as a religion is the unique exposition of the absolute truth, which will show man how to live in peace and harmony with his fellow beings.

**Suggestions**:

Having studied in-depth the Buddhism Philosophy for alleviation the down-trodden and socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Caste men in India and the need to empower them, ventured to make the following provisional
suggestions and recommendations on the basis of the findings, for the policy makers to ameliorate the living standards of the Scheduled Castes and make them part and parcel of the mainstream of the society.

➢ All the while the ruling class thinks that the economic ‘benefits’ extended to the untouchables alone are enough. Our experience shows that their assumption is quite wrong. Empowerment does not mean mere extending of income generating opportunity. It only takes note of one dimension of the problem.

➢ Empowerment is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. More than lifting them above the poverty line and improving the quality of life, empowerment should make them self-confident, gain self-respect and create among them the feeling that they are not socially, culturally, educationally second rate citizens but part of the mainstream of national life. Empowerment is more sociological and psychological.

➢ Finally, efforts should be made to make their mindset free from inhibitions of inferiority complex and to erase the memory of social stigma attached to them from the ages immemorial.

➢ Returning finally to my original hypothesis, can it now be recognized as a genuine statement? Evidently I can only claim partial endorsement of this supposition. Expressed in this hypothesis is the explicit assumption that within a Buddhism theistic sphere of reference free-will undoubtedly provides an indispensable role. I consider that this thesis has established the creditability of this proposition. Moreover I regard that my analysis and evaluation of this issue from a Buddhist perspective, has adequately confirmed that free-will certainly functions as an indispensable concept of to support their doctrinal principles of the experiential world. However, within a Buddhist frame of reference all concepts at an ultimate level of truth have to be recognized as conditioned, relative and ultimately empty. Clearly this is the crucial and significant distinction, for the contrived and significant distinction, for the
contrived and ontological purpose of the Hindusim theological agenda can never be should by Buddhist philosophical thought.

➢ In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge that the outcome of this thesis is defined by my particular methodology. Within the parameters of analogous interpretation I have engaged in the process of assessing a nation of free-will within the philosophical principles and religious language of both Hinduism and Buddhist thinking. Based upon each tradition’s categories of experience and practice I have sought to carefully justify any speculative enquiry and evaluate assumptions this has yielded. Thus appreciation of how and why each tradition values this concept as significant and essential to their truth claims has been made intelligible through this framework.

➢ I admit that academic appraisal of such a methodology could be highly critical of the precise manner in which I have defined the ‘voice’ of the Hinduism and Buddhist traditions and the role of Buddhism philosophy for the alleviation of down-trodden and followed by the contribution of Ambedkar in brining the social changes in the society. Many would claim that I have assumed too much commonality amongst those of a Hinduism or Buddhist affiliation. I believe However, that I have pursued an adequate framework of enquiry in which genuinely to explore my hypothesis. Throughout this thesis I have been very mindful that language and meaning cannot be assumed to correspond to insight and experience. In my opinion this thesis has clearly exposed this to be the case. In both traditions a notion of free-will is regarded as an intrinsic part of human being. For Buddhism this remains a factual issue concerning essential reality maintaining a posteriori status within Buddhist insight.

➢ However, this study is not conclusive. There is a need to examine the demands made by different states for greater autonomy. So, it is necessary to examine further.