

The Path of Joy

Issue 58 (November 2018 – February 2019)

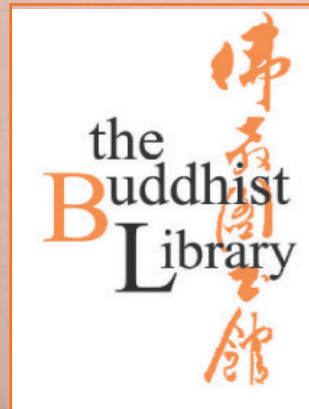
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'I do not say that the breakthrough to the Four Noble Truths is accompanied by suffering or displeasure. Rather, the breakthrough to the Four Noble Truths is accompanied by happiness and joy.'

An Analysis of the Path: Magga-Vibhanga Sutta (SN 45:8).

Photo Credit: Ricky Tay



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Bhante Says

The Significance of Robes and Books Offerings

I want to say a few words about the importance of the Robes Offering and Books Offering Ceremony.

The Pali word 'Sangha' means 'group.'

In the Sangha, there are 2 sections – the Bhikkhu Sangha comprising monks and Bhikkhuni Sangha comprising nuns.

The Buddhist Maha Sangha started during the Buddha's lifetime more than 25 centuries ago. Although nowadays there are monks belonging to different Buddhist traditions and therefore wearing differently coloured robes, even so, we can say that this is the oldest uniform in the world and monks have worn and are wearing this uniform without much change up to today.

Symbolically, the Buddhist Sangha's robe has the meaning of spiritual maturity. When the leaves of trees grow old, their colour changes to orange. This does not mean that all Buddhist monks are necessarily spiritually mature. We are nevertheless trying to spiritually mature by practising the teachings of the Buddha.

The highest spiritual maturity in Buddhism is Buddhahood or enlightenment.

Monks are fully committed to achieving that goal. As lay people, you are also committed to achieving that goal. But you are not totally committed because you have so many worldly commitments in your daily lives. On the other hand, Buddhist monks and nuns have given up their worldly commitments so we are free to develop total commitment towards the teachings of the Buddha.

When you offer robes to the Sangha, you are reminding the monks thus -

'Venerable sirs, you have all committed yourselves

towards attaining total spiritual maturity. Not only that. You are also committed towards showing us how to attain full spiritual maturity according to the way shown by the Buddha.'

If both sides can think in this way, this robe offering ceremony can be very meaningful.

However, there is another important symbolical meaning of monks' robes. That is the principle of impermanence.

The robe reminds us of impermanence.

Monks should be mindful of impermanence all the time. Remembering impermanence helps us to maintain our principles. I think you all know that a monk who has received higher ordination has committed to observing 227 precepts. Some of the precepts may be minor but there are very important precepts too.

And so there are guidelines for everything monks do whether it is walking, talking, eating and so on. In order to practise all these precepts, we must be mindful of the principle of impermanence. If we realise that we, ourselves, are impermanent, it becomes more difficult for us to break the rules. This is an important teaching for lay people too.

Being mindful of impermanence does not mean that we have to be sad or cry. What it does mean, however, is that we have to work in a more righteous way.

We, monks, are also used to chanting protection or blessing sutras. The main purpose of chanting these sutras is to bless or protect lay people.

So we can also say that we conduct the robes offering ceremony once a year to give an opportunity for lay people to show their appreciation

for the kindness of monks. In a way, I can say that a robes offering ceremony is a thanksgiving day for laypeople.

On the monks' part, we don't receive the robes without any thoughts. When you offer the robes to us, we always think of your good health, happiness and spiritual progress.

Thus, as you can see, the robes offering ceremony has many significant meanings.

While it is common for Buddhist temples and Dharma centres to conduct robes offering ceremonies, the Buddhist Library has an additional, unique, practice. This is the books offering ceremony. On the same day, we encourage people to offer Dharma books.

Anyway, I feel a bit sad also. Nowadays, people are getting lazier and lazier to read books. You can see people fiddling around with their mobile phones, even taking selfies. Reading books online seems to be more popular than reading ordinary books.

Nevertheless, I still feel that if we take an ordinary book and go somewhere quiet to read, our attention is better. So please keep up the reading habit. Don't let it die. Otherwise, it will have a negative effect.

Personally, I appreciate the offering of books more than the offering of robes. Robes have a symbolic value but books can give wisdom directly to people if they read mindfully.

To end, as usual, I would like to draw your attention to what the Buddha said about robes and the gift of Dharma.

The Traditions of the Noble Ones: Ariya-vamsa Sutta (excerpt)

In this sutra, the Buddha mentioned four praiseworthy traditions that the monks follow. One of them concerns the monk's robe. As the robes offering ceremony is the only tradition relevant here, I will exclude the other three traditions.

'These four traditions of the noble ones - original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning - are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives and brahmans. Which four?

There is the case where a monk is content with any old robe cloth at all. He speaks in praise of being content with any old robe cloth at all. He doesn't, for the sake of robe cloth, do anything unseemly or inappropriate. Not getting cloth, he isn't agitated. Getting cloth, he uses it unattached to it, uninfatuated, guiltless, seeing the drawbacks (of attachment to it), and discerning the escape from them. He doesn't, on account of his contentment with any old robe cloth at all, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, and mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones.

And further, a monk endowed with these four traditions of the noble ones, if he lives in the east, conquers displeasure and is not conquered by displeasure. If he lives in the west... the north... the south, he conquers displeasure and is not conquered by displeasure. Why is that? Because the enlightened one endures both delight and displeasure...'

The Gift of Dhamma. *Itivuttaka: The Group of Fours -Iti 4.1; Iti 101*

'There are these two kinds of gifts: a gift of material things and a gift of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: a gift of the Dhamma.

There are these two kinds of sharing: sharing of material things and sharing of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: sharing of the Dhamma.

There are these two kinds of assistance: assistance with material things and assistance with the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: help with the Dhamma.

There are these two kinds of mass-donations: a mass-donation of material things and

a mass-donation of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: a mass-donation of the Dhamma.'

In conclusion, I wish to thank you all for participating so generously and enthusiastically in our robes and books offering ceremonies.

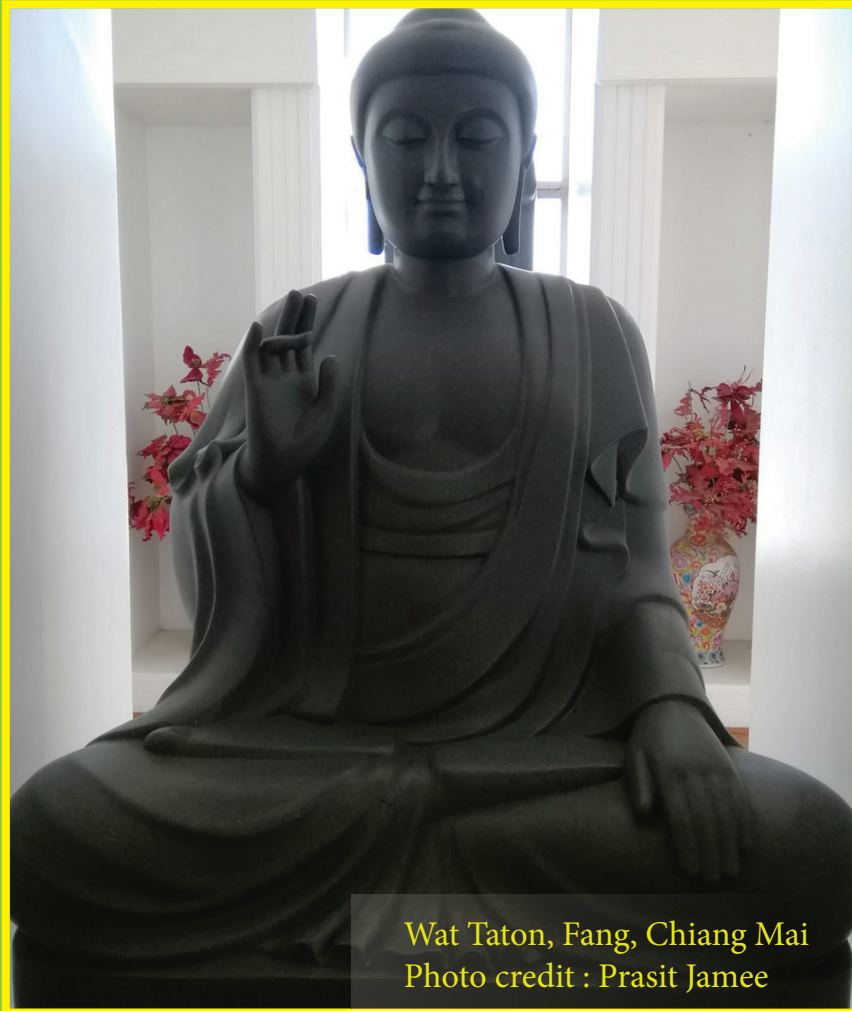
Bhante B Dhammaratana
Religious Advisor
Buddhist Library

References:

The Traditions of the Noble Ones: Ariya-vamsa Sutta (AN 4:28). Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Itivuttaka: The Group of Fours: Iti 4.1; Iti 101. Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

'Bhikkhu, 'I am' is a conceiving; 'I am this' is a conceiving; 'I shall be' is a conceiving; 'I shall not be' is a conceiving; 'I shall be possessed of form' is a conceiving; 'I shall be formless' is a conceiving; 'I shall be percipient' is a conceiving; 'I shall be non-percipient' is a conceiving; 'I shall be neither-percipient-nor-non-percipient' is a conceiving. Conceiving is a disease, conceiving is a tumour, conceiving is a dart. By overcoming all conceivings, bhikkhu, one is called a sage at peace. And the sage at peace is not born, does not age, does not die; he is not shaken and is not agitated. For there is nothing present in him by which he might be born. Not being born, how could he age? Not ageing, how could he die? Not dying, how could he be shaken? Not being shaken, why should he be agitated?
Dhatuvibhanga Sutta MN 140
Translated from the Pali
by Bhikkhu Bodhi.



Wat Taton, Fang, Chiang Mai
Photo credit : Prasit Jamee

Editorial

Two Suttas

One of the joys of reading a sutta is that it usually comes with a narrative. The story makes the sutta easier to understand and more enjoyable to read. More importantly, it provides the context in which the teaching is best understood.

Let me illustrate with two suttas.

Dhatuvibangha Sutta

This sutta opens with the Buddha arriving in Rajagaha. He approaches the potter, Bhaggava, and requests permission to spend the night in his workshop.

Bhaggava agrees but there's a young monk who is already occupying the place. So the Buddha speaks to Ven Pukkusati who is happy to accommodate the Buddha as the workshop is *'large enough'*

Both the Buddha and Ven Pukkusati spend the night in meditation.

Impressed by the young monk's diligence, the Buddha inquires, *"Under whom have you gone forth, bhikkhu? Who is your teacher? Whose Dhamma do you profess?"*

Ven Pukkusati replies that he has *'gone forth' under 'the recluse Gotama.'* *'(T)hat Blessed One is my teacher. I profess the Dhamma of the Blessed One.'*

The Buddha asks him where the Blessed One lives.

Ven Pukkusati replies that he lives in Savatthi.

The Buddha then asks him whether he has met the Blessed One. Would he be able to recognise the Buddha if they were to meet?

Ven Pukkusati replies in the negative.

Touched by Ven Pukkusati's faith in him and dedication to the Dharma, the Buddha decides to teach him Dharma.

The Buddha begins his discourse by saying that a person has six elements, six bases of contact and eighteen kinds of mental exploration.

The six elements are earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness.

The six bases of contact are the base of eye-contact, the base of ear-contact, the base of nose-contact, the base of tongue-contact, the base of body-contact and the base of mind-contact.

The eighteen kinds of mental exploration are experienced by a person when they use their eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind to explore a form, sound, smell, taste, tangible and mind-object respectively to experience a pleasant, unpleasant or neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant experience.

He teaches Ven Pukkusati to contemplate on the first five elements to develop dispassion towards them, *'to see them with proper wisdom as (they) actually (are) thus: 'This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.'*

With regard to the sixth element – consciousness – he teaches Ven Pukkusati to contemplate on feelings (pleasant, painful and neither-pleasant-nor-painful) to realise that they are impermanent, dependent on the relevant contacts that give rise to them. When the contacts arise, the feelings arise. When they terminate, the corresponding feelings then cease and subside.

When the meditator's mind has gone into a state of perfect equanimity described as *'purified and bright, malleable, wieldy, and radiant'* and, if the meditator were to direct that equanimity towards

the bases of the respective formless realms (the fifth to eighth jhanas, namely, the base of infinite space, the base of infinite consciousness, the base of nothingness and the base of neither-preception-nor-not-perception) and to develop their mind accordingly, that equanimity, supported by the relevant base and clinging to it, would be able to remain in the relevant formless realm for a very long time (said to be 20, 40, 60 or 84 eons depending on the relevant formless realm).

The Buddha realises that Ven Pukkusati has already attained the fourth jhana on his own even before meeting the Buddha and has a strong attachment to it. He warns him that because the attainment of the formless realms requires the meditator's equanimous mind to cling to them, no matter how subtly, it is conditioned and therefore the abiding in the formless realms is impermanent and subject to suffering. It is not liberation. Beings there remain subject to birth, ageing and death and may be reborn in other realms including the lower realms like anyone else.

Having delivered the bad news, the Buddha then delivers the good news. There is a way out.

The meditator does 'not form any condition or generate any volition tending towards either being or non-being. Since he does not form any condition or generate any volition tending towards either being or non-being, he does not cling to anything in this world.

When he does not cling, he is not agitated. When he is not agitated, he personally attains Nibbana. He understands thus: 'Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.'

Finally, the Buddha educates Ven Pukkusati how a monk who has meditated in this way develops the four supreme foundations. They develop the foundation of wisdom because they have mastered the knowledge of the destruction of all suffering, the foundation of truth because they have realised nibbana which has an undeceptive nature, the foundation of relinquishment for they

have uprooted all attachments and the foundation of peace because they have uprooted, once and for all, greed, hatred and delusion.

Sometime during the discourse, it dawns on Ven Pukkusati:

'Indeed, the Teacher has come to me! The Sublime One has come to me! The Fully Enlightened One has come to me!'

He immediately prostrates himself and apologises to the Buddha, requesting full ordination.

The Buddha forgives him for his '*transgression*' and asks him whether he possesses the full set of robes and bowl.

Lacking these requisites, Ven Pukkusati goes in search of them.

Unfortunately, on the way, he is killed by a cow. Later the monks ask the Buddha where Ven Pukkusati has been reborn. The Buddha confirms that Ven Pukkusati has been reborn in Tusita Heaven where he will in due course attain arahantship without returning to this world.

Bhikkhu Bodhi has described this sutra as '*beautiful, poetic and deep.*' It certainly is all of that but it is also long and not easy to understand at one go so repeated reading and contemplation may be necessary. Nevertheless, it is a fundamentally important and profound teaching and worth all the effort.

I would strongly urge readers to read or listen to Bhikkhu Bodhi's comprehensive translation and commentary which includes the interesting back story of the meeting between the Buddha and Ven Pukkusati (not mentioned in the sutra) which we may want to accept or reject.

Anathapindikovada Sutta

In this second sutra, Anathapindika, the celebrated supporter of the Buddha who donated to the Sangha the monastery known as Jeta's Grove, is terminally ill. He suffers excruciating bouts of

pain and requests Ven Sariputta to visit him.

Ven Sariputta arrives at Anathapindilka's residence, accompanied by Ven Ananda. He gives the patient advice on relinquishment.

At the conclusion of the teaching, Ven Ananda notices Anathapindika weeping.

Concerned, Ven Ananda asks him, "Are you foundering, householder, are you sinking?"

"I am not foundering, Ven Ananda, I am not sinking. But although I have long waited upon the Teacher and bhikkhus worthy of esteem, never before have I heard such a talk on the Dhamma."

Ven Sariputta then interjects.

"Such talk on the Dhamma, householder, is not given to lay people clothed in white. Such talk on the Dhamma is given to those who have gone forth."

"Well then, Ven Sariputta, let such talk on the Dhamma be given to lay people clothed in white. There are clansmen with little dust in their eyes who are wasting away through not hearing such talk on the Dhamma."

Ven Sariputta's teaching on relinquishment in the sutra is worth memorising and contemplating on a daily basis.

"Then, householder, you should train thus: 'I will not cling to the eye, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the eye.

I will not cling to the ear...I will not cling to the nose...I will not cling to the tongue...I will not cling to the body...I will not cling to the mind and my consciousness will not be dependent on the mind.

I will not cling to forms...I will not cling to sounds...I will not cling to odours...I will not cling to flavours...I will not cling to tangibles...I will not cling to mind-objects, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-objects.'

I will not cling to eye-consciousness...I will not cling to ear-consciousness...I will not cling to nose-consciousness...I will not cling to tongue-consciousness...I will not cling to body-consciousness...I will not cling to mind-consciousness and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-consciousness.'

I will not cling to eye-contact...I will not cling to ear-contact...I will not cling to nose-contact...I will not cling to tongue-contact...I will not cling to body-contact...I will not cling to mind-contact and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-contact.

I will not cling to feeling born of eye-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of ear-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of nose-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of tongue-contact ...I will not cling to feeling born of body-contact ...I will not cling to feeling born of mind-contact and my consciousness will not be dependent on feeling born of mind-contact.

I will not cling to the earth element...I will not cling to the water element...I will not cling to the fire element...I will not cling to the air element...I will not cling to the space element...I will not cling to the consciousness element and my consciousness will not be dependent on the consciousness element.

I will not cling to material form...I will not cling to feeling...I will not cling to perception...I will not cling to (mental) formations...I will not cling to consciousness, and my consciousness will not be dependent on consciousness.

I will not cling to the base of infinite space ...I will not cling to the base of infinite consciousness...I will not cling to the base of nothingness...I will not cling to the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and my consciousness will not be dependent on the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

I will not cling to this world and my consciousness will not be dependent on this world. I will not cling to the world beyond and my consciousness

will not be dependent on the world beyond.

I will not cling to what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, encountered, sought after, and examined by the mind, and my consciousness will not be dependent on that.'

Not long afterwards, Anathapindika passes away and is reborn as a deity.

Conclusion

There is one common thread that runs through both these sutras. This is the principle of relinquishment which is a fundamentally important and largely unique aspect of Buddhism.

Relinquishment will assist lay people like us to live happily, die with a calm mind (even amidst pain) and have a fortunate rebirth, like Anathapindika has achieved. But as the Buddha has so skillfully shown in the *Dhatuvibhanga Sutta*, relinquishment is indispensable even for accomplished monks if they want to take that final, all important step, to nibbana.

As usual, I wish you pleasant reading.

Chwee Beng
Editor

References:

Anathapindikovada Sutta: Advice to Anathapindika. MN 143. Translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Bodhi.

Dhatuvibhanga Sutta.: The Exposition of the Elements. MN 140. Translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Bodhi.

Visit or google the following websites:

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/audio/majjhima-nikaya-dhatu-vibhanga-sutta-the-exposition-of-the-elements> for Bhikkhu Bodhi's audio translation and [http://lirs.ru/lib/sutra/The_Middle_Length_Discourses\(Majjhima_Nikaya\),Nanamoli,Bodhi,1995.pdf](http://lirs.ru/lib/sutra/The_Middle_Length_Discourses(Majjhima_Nikaya),Nanamoli,Bodhi,1995.pdf) for the pdf version of his translation.

BL EVENT

Memorial service for Urgyen Sangharashita who passed away on Oct. 30, 2018.

Ven. Wiloye Wimalajothi led the religious service. Dr. Tham Weng Yew delivered the eulogy. Photo Credit: Diane Wong.



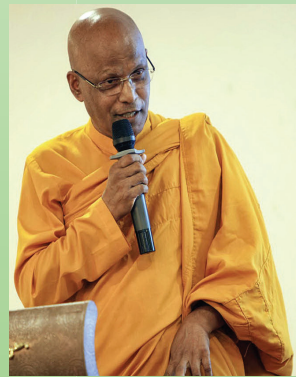
BL EVENT

Bhante B. Dhammaratana's 80th Birthday Celebration

Date: Dec 9, 2018

Venue: Miao Yi Vegetarian Restaurant

Photo Credit: Ricky Tay



BL EVENT

BL Funfair

Date: Nov 18, 2018

Venue: Vacant Plot of Land next to Aljunied MRT

Photo Credit: Koon Teck



BL EVENT

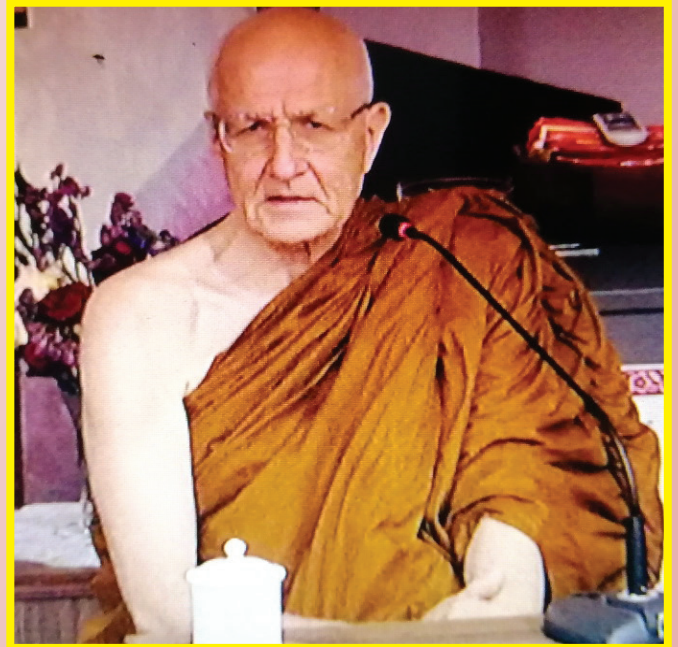
Talk on *Experiential vs Intellectual Knowledge*

Date: Dec 19, 2018

Venue: BL Auditorium

Speaker: Ajahn Viradhammo

Photo Credit: Koon Teck



BL EVENT

Medichant 2018

Date: Dec 31, 2018

Venue: BL Auditorium

Photo Credit: Koon Teck



后来僧众问佛陀 Pukkasati 法师投胎到哪了。佛陀肯定 Pukkasati 法师已投胎到兜率天并会在那征得阿罗汉果。

比丘菩提形容这部经“即美丽，诗情画意，又深不可测”。它绝对是如此但它也很长和不容易一次过就能理解，需要反复的阅读和思考。无论如何，它是值得花上心思去了解的深奥教义。

我会恳请读者去阅读或聆听比丘菩提详细的翻译和评论，包括佛陀与 Pukkasati 法师的有趣外传（不在经文里面）关于佛陀与 Pukkasati 法师。

《須達多经》

在这第二部经，須達多经里，这位捐献祇园精舍给僧众的佛陀支持者病危了。他陷入剧烈的痛苦之中并要求舍利弗来探望他。

阿难尊者陪伴舍利弗到达須達多的住处。接着舍利弗向病人针对舍弃做开示。

开示完毕后，阿难尊者发现須達多在哭泣。

关心的阿难尊者便问他“在家居士，你在挣扎吗？你在下沉吗？”

“阿难尊者，我没有在挣扎，也没有在下沉。不过我服侍了师父们这么久，却从来没有听过如此妙法。”

这时舍利弗介入谈话。

“在家居士，这种佛法不是给白衣在家人所说的。这种佛法是讲给出家人听的。”

“既然如此，舍利弗请将此佛法说给白衣在家人吧。有些眼睛沾不得沙子的族人因为没有听到如此妙法而在颓废之中。”

舍利弗开示《舍弃》这部经典是值得每天背诵和思考的。

“在家居士，你应该训练：“我不对眼睛执著，我的觉知不依靠眼睛。。。”

“我不对耳朵执著。。我不对鼻子执著。。我不对舌头执著。。我不对身体执著。。我不对意识执著，我的觉知也不依靠意识。

“我不对色起执著。。我不对声起执著。。我不对香起执著。。我不对味起执著。。我不对触起执著。。我不对法起执著，我的觉知也不依靠法。

“我不对眼识起执著。。我不对耳识起执著。。

我不对鼻识起执著。。我不对舌识起执著。。我不对身识起执著。。我不对意识起执著，我的觉知也不依靠意识。

“我不对眼触起执著。。我不对耳触起执著。。我不对鼻触起执著。。我不对舌触起执著。。我不对身触起执著。。我不对意触起执著，我的觉知也不依靠意触。

“我不对眼触的感觉起执著。。我不对耳触的感觉起执著。。我不对鼻触的感觉起执著。。我不对舌触的感觉起执著。。我不对身触的感觉起执著。。我不对意触的感觉起执著，我的觉知也不依靠意识的感觉起执著。

“我不对地起执著。。我不对水起执著。。我不对火起执著。。我不对风起执著。。我不对空起执著。。我不对识起执著，我的觉知也不依靠意识。

“我不对色起执著。。我不对受起执著。。我不对想起执著。。我不对行起执著。。我不对识起执著。。我不对识起执著，我的觉知也不依靠意识。

“我不对空无尽处起执著。。我不对识无尽处起执著。。我不对无所有处起执著。。我不对和非有想非無想处起执著。。我不对识起执著。。我不对识起执著，我的觉知也不依靠意识。

“我不对世间起执著，我的自觉也不依靠世间。我不对出世间起执著，我的觉知也不依靠出世间。”

“我不对看到的，听到的，感觉到的，意识到的，接触到的，追求的，心智研究的，和我的觉知不被依靠。”

不久之后，須達多就过世并投生为天神。

结论

这两部经典有个共同之处。那就是舍弃的原则是佛法特殊和重要的一块。

舍弃会帮助我们这些在家人活的开心，死的安心（即使有点痛苦）像須達多一样往生善道。就如佛陀在 Dhatuvibangha Sutta 所指出，舍弃是得道僧众走向涅槃所必修之法。

一如既往，我祝你阅读愉快。

Chwee Beng
编辑

两部经典

阅读经文的其中一个好处就是它通常都带有叙文。叙文让经文更容易被理解和阅读。更重要的是，它能提供经文的主要内容让人理解。

我要用两部经典来说明。

Dhatuvibangha Sutta

这部经是从佛陀抵达 Rajagaha 开始。他走向陶瓷工人 Bhaggava，并要求在他的工作室过夜。

Bhaggava 答应要求，但已经有另一位年轻的法师住在里面了。于是，佛陀便向 Pukkasati 法师要求并得到他的同意一起住在工作室里，因为工作室有足够的空间。

就这样，佛陀和 Pukkasati 法师便通过禅修过了一夜。

佛陀非常佩服 Pukkasati 法师的精进便问道，“比丘，你是从哪来？谁是你的师父？你修的法是谁教的？”

Pukkasati 法师回复他皈依‘隐士释迦牟尼’。那位尊者是我的老师。我修的是尊者的佛法。

佛陀问他尊者的住处。

Pukkasati 法师说他住在 Savatthi。

佛陀再问他有没有见过尊者。如果见到佛陀能不能认出来？

Pukkasati 法师回复没有见过也认不出来。

佛陀被 Pukkasati 法师对他的信心和对佛法的热诚深深感动，便决定传授他佛法。

佛陀开示说人有六大缘起、六识、和十八界。

六大缘起属地、水、火、风、空、识这六种元素。

六识属眼识，耳识，鼻识，舌识，身识和意识。

十八界是当人用心去体会，用眼，耳，鼻，舌，身，意去探索色，声，香，味，触，法，因而产生愉快或不愉快，和既没有愉快或不愉快的感觉。

他教 Pukkasati 法师沉思这前面的五大元素，用正见来看待它们，以正确的智慧去看它们，实际上就是

这样：“这不属于我的，我不是这，这不是我”。对于第六元素-识，他教 Pukkasati 法师去了解这些情感（愉快，痛苦或既不愉快也不痛苦），这些情感都是无常，都是因缘和合而成的。当因缘具足时，情感显现。而当因缘不足时，相对的情感也就不存在。

当一个禅修者的心进入一种完美的平静，又被形容成“纯净，光芒四射，随心所欲，和耀眼夺目”，而当修行者将这种平静传向各种无形净土（第五至第八禅那，空无尽处，识无尽处，无所有处，和非有想非无想处）来开发心智，那种平静加上各种因缘就能让禅修者在相当的净土逗留一段很长的时间。（可以到 20, 40, 60, 或 84 及永世）

佛陀意识到 Pukkasati 法师在遇见佛陀前已经证到第四禅那而且对此有相当大的执著。佛陀警告他证悟无形净土需要禅修者保持平静的心态，无论多巧妙，它都是有因果果报；所以进入无形净土即是无常也会受苦。这不是解脱。众生在此净土也会遭受生，老，病，死和堕入下三恶道的可能。

佛陀传达这个坏消息后紧接着又传达了好消息。就是还是有办法解脱。

禅修者不去造业或做些倾向存在或不存在的修行，不对世间任何东西产生执著。

当他不执着，他就不会动摇。当他不被动摇，他就证悟了。他了解“生已被毁灭了，神圣的生活已过去了，该做的已经做了，不会再有来生了。”

最后，佛陀指点 Pukkasati 法师，一个出家人如何以这种方法修得四种殊胜的根基。他们掌握了毁灭痛苦的知识因而产生智慧的根基，了解涅槃的真相而产生真理的根基，拔去所有的执著而产生舍弃的根基，除掉贪，憎，痴而得到平静的根基。

就在传授的时候，Pukkasati 法师忽然觉醒；

“果然，我的师父已经来找我了！崇高无上的尊者来找我了！完全证悟的尊者来找我了！”

他立刻向佛陀叩拜道歉，并要求皈依出家。

佛陀原谅他的“过失”并且问他有没有一套僧袍和钵。

Pukkasati 法师因为缺乏这些东西便出去寻找。很不幸，在半路被一头牛撞死了。

惯，不要断掉它。不然会有不好的印象。

我赞赏供佛书多过供袈裟。

袈裟虽有代表性，但人们如果能专研佛书就能够直接得到智慧。

最后，我要把你的注意力放在一部关于佛陀谈谈到袈裟和赠送佛法的经。

《尊者的传统》： Ariya-vamsa Sutta

在这部经里，佛陀提到四种值得僧众维护的传统。其中一样就和袈裟有关。由于供袈裟仪式在这里是唯一相关的传统，我就不说其他三个传统了。

这四种尊者的传统— 原始，持久，传统，顺古，没有被更改，从来没有被更改，亦没有被怀疑，也从不被怀疑，更不会被有知识的梵天所否定。是哪四种传统呢？

一种是为当法师对任何旧袈裟都满足。他对任何旧袈裟都赞叹不已。他不会因为一件袈裟而做出不恰当的举动。不会因为旧袈裟而感到沮丧。拥有袈裟，也不会对袈裟执著。他明白执著的不良影响所以心不被动摇。也不会因自己不贪图袈裟而感到自豪，更不会因此而歧视他人。他勤勉，灵巧，警惕，的保持正念。这就是法师保持古老原始佛教的传统。

再说，赋予这四种尊者传统的法师，如果他住在东方，他能够征服不愉快并不被不愉快所征服。如果他住在西方，他能够征服不愉快并不被不愉快所征服。如果他住在北方，他能够征服不愉快并不被不愉快所征服。如果他住在南方，他能够征服不愉快并不被不愉快所征服。何以故？因为证悟者能忍受愉快和不愉快这两种情绪。。。

Itivuttaka: The Group of Fours - Iti 4.1; Iti 101

有两种礼物；物质的礼物和佛法的礼物。两者之间，佛法的礼物才更珍贵。

有两种分享；物质的分享和佛法的分享。两者之间，佛法的分享才更珍贵。

有两种协助；物质的协助和佛法的协助。两者之间，佛法的协助才更珍贵。

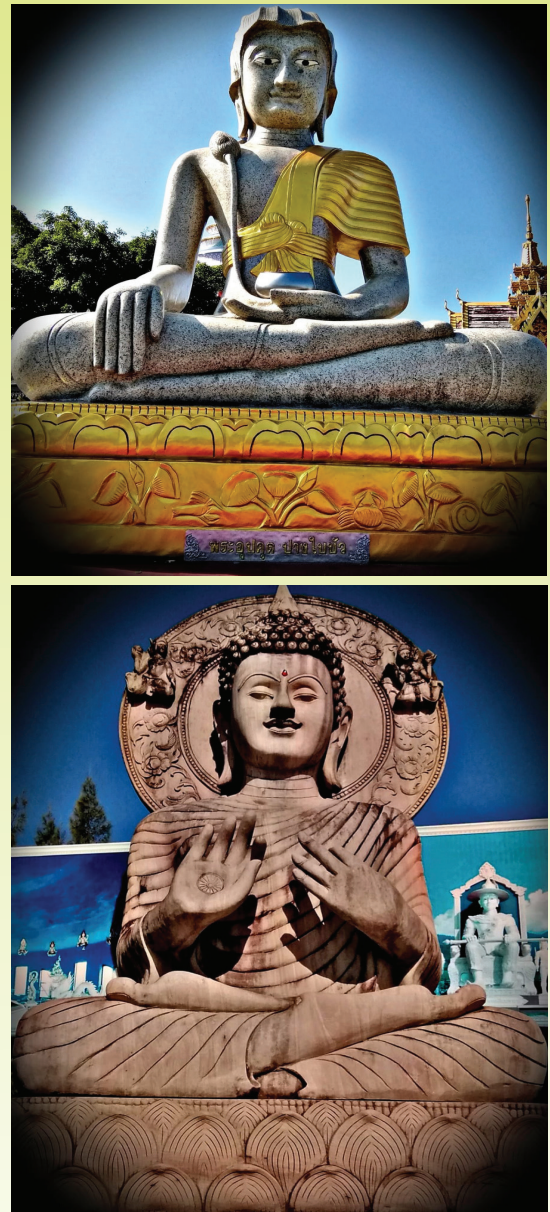
有两种布施；物质的布施和佛法的布施。两者之间，佛法的布施才更珍贵。

最后，我要感激所有功德主对供袈裟和供佛书仪式的慷慨捐献和鼎力支持。

达摩拉哒那法师

宗教顾问

佛教图书馆



Wat Taton, Fang, Chiang Mai
Photo credit : Prasit Jamee



达摩拉哒那法师开示

《供袈裟和经书的意义》

我要谈关于供袈裟和经书仪式的重要性。

在巴利文，僧众就等于团体。

僧众又可分为两组；男性僧众为比丘和女性僧众为比丘尼。

大比丘僧早在佛陀时代二十五个世纪前就有了。

虽然现在的僧众属于不同的传承也因此穿着不同颜色的袈裟，但我们还是可以说袈裟至今也没有多大的改变，因此袈裟是这世上最古老的制服。

佛教的袈裟有着精神成熟的意义。当树叶变老后，颜色就变成橘色。但这并不表示所有的僧众都精神成熟。然而我们还是精进的修持佛陀的教导。

在佛教，最高的精神成熟就是成佛或证悟。

僧众当鞠躬尽瘁的达到这个目标。身为在家信众，你也可以以这个目标精进的修持。分别在于你因为有很多俗世的牵挂所以不能全心全意的投入。而比丘和比丘尼都放弃了俗世的牵挂所以可以一心向佛。

当你供养僧众袈裟时，你在提醒僧众；

尊贵的法师，你们承诺一心达到精神成熟。不仅如此，你们也承诺教导我们如何达到佛陀精神成熟的方法。

如果双方都有这样的想法，那供袈裟仪式就别有意义。

其实，僧众的袈裟还有另一个含义。那就是无常。

袈裟提醒了我们无常。

僧众应该时刻观无常。铭记无常能帮助我们保持我们的原则。我想你们都知道一位皈依三宝的和尚必须持两百二十七戒。这些戒律当中有轻重之分。

这些戒律规定僧众要如何行住做卧等举动。为了守住这些戒律，我们要观无常。如果我们意识到我们自己也是无常的话，就不容易破戒。这对在家信众也是一项重要的教导。

观无常不代表我们需要伤心或哭泣。这只是表示我们要精进的修持正道。

我们身为和尚经常诵念经文或持咒，做这些事主要是为了祝福或保护在家信众。

所以我们可以说我们一年一度办的供袈裟仪式是为了让信众有个机会对僧众的慈悲表示谢意。我可以说供袈裟仪式是在家信众对僧众的感恩日。

僧众在接受袈裟时不是没有意念的。当你们供奉袈裟给我们时，我们会祝福你健康，快乐和精神上的成长。

所以你可以看见供袈裟仪式别有意义。

虽然佛堂和佛教中心都有办供袈裟仪式，佛教图书馆有个独特的做法，那就是供佛书仪式。在同一天，我们也鼓励人们供佛书。

其实，我感到有点悲哀。近来人们越来越懒得读书。你可以看见人们都在玩手机或自拍。上网读电子书也好像比读书更加普遍。

无论如何，我还是觉得拿一本书到清静的地方读会比较专注。所以请继续保持阅读习