

The Path of Joy

Issue 56 (March 2018 – June 2018)

PERMIT MCI (P) 067/10/2017

Printer :

Nu-Colours Print

Licence No. L015/10/2017.

Publisher :

Buddhist Research Society,

2&4, Lorong 24A, Geylang,

Singapore 398526.

*'When the mind is stained, there is no joy.
There being no joy, there is no rapture.
There being no rapture, there is no serenity.
There being no serenity, he dwells in suffering.'*

*Pamadaviharin Sutta: Dwelling
in Heedlessness*

Trans by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

*(Alms round with Ven Dhammavuddho
Mahathera or 'Bhante Hye')*

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Bhante Says

Renunciation

Today I would like to discuss something based on a Pali text from the *Anguturra Nikaya*.

In one of the short discourses, the Buddha spoke to the monks about what kind of thoughts gave him the idea of renouncing the world to become the Buddha. In that discourse, we can also learn something about ourselves, a characteristic common to all ordinary people.

When the Buddha was living as a *bodhisatta*, when he was still an ordinary person, a certain understanding made him renounce the world. The Buddha talked about the threefold pride. He had practised virtues in many past lives. Even then, he was not perfect. He had some defilements. He had the threefold pride or *mana* in Pali. *Mana* has several meanings, all related to pride.

When we want to check the weight of something, we use a scale. When we want to buy, say, some vegetables, we put them on one side. On the other side, we put a weight. That's how we come to a decision as regards the weight of vegetables that we want to buy. That scale is called *mana* too.

We also try to compare ourselves with other people. For example, a healthy person thinks he is a very healthy person. He compares himself with another person who is not so healthy. Sometimes we have that kind of thoughts in our minds even though we may not be aware of them. When a person is young, he thinks, *"I am very young. So-and-so is old. I am younger."* When a person is very strong, he has a kind of pride because of his strength. When a person has some wealth, based on that wealth, sometimes they develop some *mana* or pride based on that comparison.

When somebody says to us, *"You look very healthy,"* we feel very happy. It is a good thing to feel happy but behind that happiness, there is a slight *mana*. Like this, many things in our lives

can make us proud. In the *sutta*, the Buddha mentioned that, because of three reasons, he had some pride.

The first pride he mentioned was pride due to his position. He said,

"Monks, when I was young and lived a royal life, I had three palaces. For the summer, I had one palace. For the winter, I had another palace. For the rainy season, I had yet another palace. So when the season changed, I changed my residence accordingly. People carried white ceremonial umbrellas for me. Wherever I went, someone stood behind me with a wonderfully decorated umbrella. In some seasons, I did not come down from my palaces. There were young, very pretty ladies to attend to me. All my clothes were from Benares, a city with its high quality silk with silver and gold threaded work. Even my shoes were made with golden and silver threads made in Benares. I led such a wonderful life. I had some pride."

"But one day, I was thinking, 'All these things are not permanent for me. I have seen a person who was sick and suffering. Then I started to think. I realised that this man was once healthy and young but now he is a very sick person. Because of sickness, he is suffering. Nothing is now more important to him than health. So whatever I have as a prince is not valuable. I too may get sick one day. If I get sick and suffer like him, all these things which I have are not valuable. There is no reason for me to be proud of, or attached to, these things. So I came to that understanding after seeing this sick man. And I decided to leave my royal life.'"

Then the Buddha said that when he was young he was very strong. He had gone for training in all the martial arts.

"I was a very strong and skillful warrior, able to defeat anyone. But when I saw someone who was suffering due to old age, I realised that one day I will be like that. By thinking in that way, I dropped my mana. So I decided to give up my royal life realising that it was not permanent."

"When I was young, I never thought of impermanence of my life. I thought I would be able to experience happiness of youth, having many material things. But one day, I happened to see a dead body. Then I started to think. Whatever I have will come to an end when I have to face death like this man. So therefore there is no need for me to have pride. Because whether I belong to a royal family or not, death will come to me.

So looking at three aspects of life – ageing, sickness and death - I have given up my pride and decided to renounce the world and ordain. In the end, I managed to attain enlightenment and become the Buddha."

So to understand the reality of this world, due to wealth and comfort, young age and strength, good life, and other kinds of facilities, people will develop *mana*. If a person develops *mana* as a result of these things, he will never be able to come to understand the reality of this world. So to understand the reality, *mana* can be a hindrance. So one should not be proud of all these things as they can and will change. Therefore there is no need to have *mana*.

You may think that this is a lesson just for monks. But the Buddha taught this lesson for all of us.

The important thing is that we should not take this advice in a negative sense. There is nothing wrong with having wealth, health and long life. It just means that we should adopt a realistic approach to life, realise that all these things are impermanent, and cherish and use them for the happiness of ourselves and others especially for those less fortunate than ourselves.

To end, let me quote from the Buddha's own words in the *Sukhamala Sutta* –

'Subject to birth, subject to aging, subject to death, run-of-the-mill people are repelled by those who suffer from that to which they are subject.

And if I were to be repelled by beings subject to these things, it would not be fitting for me, living as they do.'

As I maintained this attitude - knowing the Dhamma without acquisitions –

I overcame all intoxication with health, youth, and

life as one who sees renunciation as rest.

For me, energy arose. Unbinding was clearly seen. There's now no way I could partake of sensual pleasures.

Having followed the holy life, I will not return.'

I wish you great success in your Dhamma practice.

Bhante B Dhammaratana

Religious Adviser

Buddhist Library

Reference:

Sukhamala Sutta: Refinement AN 3.38 Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

'We also try to compare ourselves with other people. For example, a healthy person thinks he is a very healthy person. He compares himself with another person who is not so healthy. ... When a person is young, they think, "I am very young. So-and-so is old. I am younger." ... When a person has some wealth, based on that wealth, sometimes they develop some mana or pride based on that comparison.'

BL EVENT

BL EVENT: LABOUR DAY RETREAT

Date: May 1, 2018

Venue: BL Level 2 Auditorium

Led by Bhante W Wimalajothi, Ven Chuan Guan
& Prof Rathnasiri

Photo Credit: Yeo Koon Teck



Editorial

A Conversation with Venerable Dhammavuddho Mahathera ('Bhante Hye')

The best way to study the Dhamma is to read the original *suttas* taught by the Buddha during his lifetime. In that way, besides learning what he actually said, we get to see the Buddha as a fellow human being, albeit an infinitely wise and compassionate one. Sometimes, there's even a little humour. But it's a rare treat indeed when the story is touching and we are left to guess what the outcome is.

The *Dhakkina Vibhanga Sutta* (the *Exposition of Offerings*) begins with Maha Pajapati Gotami, the Buddha's foster mother, offering the Buddha two pieces of new cloth '*spun ... and woven by (her) especially for the Blessed One.*' But the Buddha refuses to accept them. Not once but thrice. He asks her to offer it to the Sangha instead, saying, "*Give it to the Sangha, Gotami. When you give it to the Sangha, the offering will be made both to me and the Sangha.*"

Ven Ananda then reminds the Buddha how helpful he and his foster mother have been to each other over the years. The Buddha agrees. He takes the opportunity to explain the '*fourteen kinds of personal offerings*' beginning with a gift to a fully enlightened Buddha down to an offering made to an animal. He stresses how the virtue and good character of the recipient increases the merit accrued to the giver. But, interestingly, the Buddha does not confirm whether or not he finally accepts his foster mother's gift for himself. We are left to deduce that he did not.

Anyone who reads the *sutta* for the first time may well wonder why the virtue and character (or lack thereof) of the recipient affects so significantly the amount of merit that the giver acquires. This begs several questions. Would this not encourage a prospective giver to shop for merit by making offerings only to, say, a famous monk? And, if

intention is *kamma*, as the Buddha famously declares in another *sutta*, is not the calculative motivation of such a giver detrimental? Isn't it more important for a giver to give simply because that's the right thing to do?

In March this year, I was fortunate enough to interview Bhante Hye at Vihara Buddha Gotama in Perak, Malaysia. There I had the opportunity to request his learned opinion about merit making and other issues of practical importance to lay Dhamma practitioners, especially regarding stream entry.

Bhante Hye has dedicated his life as a Theravada monk towards promoting the original teachings of the Buddha. He has taught practically all of the Buddha's *suttas* and made them available for the benefit of anyone who is interested.

Reading Bhante Hye's life story, I am reminded of an interview given by the late Thai meditation master, Ajahn Chah. Someone asked him what differentiates him from an ordinary Buddhist monk. "*I dare,*" Ajahn replied.

Stream entry

In the Veludvareyya Sutta, the Buddha taught some Brahmins the path to stream entry, the first stage of the Buddhist path to enlightenment. Is this stream entry path still suitable for lay people today?

Stream entry is suitable at any time and all times provided we listen to the original discourses of the Buddha. Because if you listen to some other teacher, unless the teacher bases his teachings on the original *suttas*, you might get wrong view. It's very important that the Dhamma is always the five *Nikayas*. In the *Anguttara Nikaya* 4.180,

the Buddha said, *“If any monk says that the Buddha taught such-and-such a discourse, don't accept or reject the teaching. Compare it with the suttas and the vinaya. If it agrees with the suttas and the vinaya, then it agrees with the Buddha's teachings.”*

The condition for stream entry is getting Right View. In *Majjhima Nikaya* 43, the Buddha said that there are only two conditions for Right View – the voice of another and focused attention. If you have focused attention listening to someone teaching the original *suttas* of the Buddha, then you can understand. Once you understand, you have Right View. Once you have Right View, you have attained stream entry. Then you start to change. This change takes some time. But just before you die, the path will turn into fruit which means that your wisdom matures. Then three fetters fall away. That's the characteristic of a stream winner or *sotapanna*.

In the *suttas*, the Buddha said that *‘the stream’* refers to the Noble Eightfold Path. In *Majjhima Nikaya* 112, the Buddha said that we can only enter the Noble Eightfold Path in one way i.e. with Right View. You cannot enter by any other way. Once you have Right View, you will have Right Thought, then Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood. So once you enter the stream and have Right View, you will develop these five factors. Then if you strive on, you practise the sixth and seventh factors, Right Effort and Right Mindfulness. This means that in everyday life, we look within ourselves, look at our own faults, and change. This is *vipassana*. The Buddha said that before we do any action by body, speech and mind, we should reflect whether it will cause harm to ourselves or others. Before we act, we should reflect. We should also reflect during the time we perform the action and after we have performed it. So, in that way, our three *kammas* or actions will be purified.

In the suttas, the teachings on stream entry are fully taught but not laid out in sequence. To assist our readers, can you lay out the steps towards stream entry sequentially?

The Four Conditions for Stream Entry come first. They are -

- associating with ‘good men’ (people who understand the true Dhamma);
- listening to the true Dhamma;
- paying appropriate attention; and
- practising the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma.

When we have achieved this, we attain Right View and enter the stream.

There are two types of Right View – worldly Right View and Aryan Right View. Aryan Right View is understanding the Four Noble Truths. Once you understand the Four Noble Truths, you understand impermanence, suffering and non-self.

Once we become stream winners, we have attained the four characteristics of a *sotapanna* –

- ‘unshakeable faith’ (or ‘confirmed confidence’) in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha; and
- the seven Aryan virtues (abstaining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct pertaining to Right Action and abstaining from false speech, divisive speech, coarse speech and idle speech or gossip pertaining to Right Speech).

What is unshakeable faith?

Unshakeable faith is not blind faith. It is faith based on trust or confidence or understanding of the Buddha's teachings.

If a person accepts the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path but does not believe in ghosts and devas, do they have ‘unshakeable faith’?

If you don't believe in ghosts and devas, you don't believe in the five destinations of rebirth. That means you don't have a complete understanding of the Buddha's teachings. So you don't have ‘unshakeable faith.’

The Buddha said that once a person has become a stream winner, they can declare for themselves that they have attained that state. How do they do this?

There are seven distinguishing factors –

- Their minds are not obsessed by the five hindrances (sensual lust, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and remorse, and doubt) such that they cannot see things as they actually are.
- They are able to calm or concentrate their minds.
- They possess such a view as is not possessed by followers of external sects (Right View).
- They like to listen to the Dhamma. Some people only want to meditate. They don't want to listen to the Dhamma.
- When they hear the Dhamma, they are very glad and inspired.
- Even though they may be very busy, if they have the time, they like to practise the Dhamma.
- They are very straight forward. If they commit a transgression, they immediately confess.

Meditation

What is 'access concentration'? Is it mentioned in the original suttas? What part does it play, if any, in the training for stream entry?

It is not expressly mentioned as 'access concentration' in the original *suttas* but the Buddha did mention that there is a state just before you attain the first *jhana*, where the five hindrances are eliminated.

But you have to be careful. The Buddha does not mean that the five hindrances are completely eliminated at this stage. He means they are no more a hindrance. They drop to a very low level. Then you enter the first *jhana*.

You cannot dwell in that (access concentration) state. It's like somebody jumping off a cliff. He has to dive into the rock or water. You can't use it for

something else.

For stream entry, access concentration itself has no practical role. But if you attain the *first jhana*, then you are eligible to become a *sakadagamin*, the fruit of the second stage of enlightenment.

Merits and merit making

I once read in a newspaper in Thailand about a young man who sold drugs. He was arrested and he confessed. But he thought that it was alright because he donated part of the money to a temple. Is this what the Buddha meant when he said in a sutta that if the donor is not virtuous but the recipient is, the virtue of the recipient 'purifies' the gift?

When the Buddha said that the virtue of the recipient 'purifies' the gift, he meant that it makes the merit more, not that it makes the action of the donor blameless. Sometimes, we have to be careful with the translation.

You see, we have good and bad *kamma*. When you sell drugs, you have to pay for it. When you donate, you get merit for that. These are two different accounts. You cannot say that one cancels the other.

In the *Vinaya* books, there was this arahant nun famous for being the most skillful nun in psychic powers. She was in the forest meditating alone. A group of robbers stole some cattle. They came across this nun. The leader cut a piece of the meat and offered it to her. After she came out of *samadhi*, the nun contemplated and realised what had happened. Using her psychic powers, she flew to where the Buddha was staying to offer the meat to the Buddha. The Buddha had gone out on alms round so she gave it to the monk who was looking after the Buddha. He said that the Buddha would appreciate it. You see, they knew the meat was stolen but (accepted it) because it was offered with good intention.

In the Dakkhina Vibhanga Sutta, the Buddha listed the merits gained by making offerings to people of various levels of virtue in a descending order.

Isn't this problematic because, for example, people can then choose to make offerings to popular monks instead of the poor and needy so that they can get more merit?

No. You have to compare with other *suttas*.

In the *Dakkhina Vibhanga Sutta*, the Buddha said that making an offering to the Sangha is more meritorious than even offering it to the Buddha himself. So it all depends on your intention. If your intention is to offer to the Sangha so that the Sangha can continue (that is good). Once you have the Sangha, then you will continue to have the Dhamma. If the Sangha is broken, then the Dhamma is lost.

In the *Velama Sutta*, the Buddha also related how, in a previous life, he did a lot of charity. The food and drinks he gave flowed like a river. But despite giving so much, the Buddha said that the merit would have been more if he had given to just one person who has Right View. Because people who do not have Right View might have committed bad *kamma*, for example, drug addicts.

What about a person who has the selfish intention of simply accumulating more merit for themselves?

In another *sutta*, the Buddha said that if you give with selfish intention, your merit is lessened. When you give, you should give with a happy heart knowing that doing charity is good. When giving, you should not, for example, make a vow to be born a man (or woman) or to attain *nibbana* or hope to strike *toto* or something like that.

What about the notion that giving charity to the poor is somehow inferior to making donations to temples?

It all depends on who needs help more. If a poor family needs help and the monastery is well established and you give with a selfish intention, then your merit is less. If you give to a poor family and you get nothing in return that is more meritorious.

'The World' and Consciousness

In his book, *Early Buddhist Teachings – The Middle Position in Theory and Practice*, Prof Y Karunadasa wrote–

‘... the Buddha does not deny the objective reality of the world. What he denies is that which transcends the bounds of possible experience.’

Does the Buddha teach that there is no external world, that everything is in our mind? Or that the external world does exist but that we perceive it in a deluded way?

This world arises from consciousness. If there is no consciousness, there is no world. So whether it is inside or outside, it is all a creation of the mind.

So do the things we see exist or not?

They are there as far as our consciousness tells us so. It's only based on consciousness, just like in a dream. When you are dreaming it is real. Only when your dream stops, then you say it is unreal. In the same way, the world now looks real. But when you are dying, this world starts to fade away. And then you see another world arising. Like switching your TV channel. So when another world arises, that becomes real for you.

And now, quantum physics is beginning to realise this.

But, as I understand it, quantum physics says that the presence of the observer affects the way the waves behave. But that does not mean that the waves don't exist. They just behave differently depending on whether an observer is present or not.

The Buddha said that there are two views. One is that it exists. Another is that it doesn't exist.

Yes, and he rejects both. But when you say that if consciousness does not exist, then the world does not exist, are you not on the side of the annihilationist?

No, I am saying that the world exists depending on consciousness. Everything in the world is dependently arisen. That is the basic doctrine of dependent origination. The only thing is that nothing lasts.

Thank you, Bhante

References:

Dakkhina Vibanga Sutta MN 142. Translated from the Pali by Ven Bhikkhu Bodhi.

Nibbedhika Sutta: Penetrative. AN 6.63. Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu – ‘*Intention, I tell you, is kamma. Intending, one does kamma by way of body, speech, and intellect.*’

Anguttara Nikaya 4.180.

Majjhima Nikaya 43.

Majjhima Nikaya 112.

Giving. Iti 1.26. Khuddaka Nikāya. Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Kosambiya Sutta. The Kosambians. Majjhima Nikaya 48. Translated from the Pali by Ven Bhikkhu Bodhi.

‘*When a noble disciple is thus possessed of seven factors, he has well sought the character for the realisation of the fruit of stream entry ... he possesses the fruit of stream entry.*’ (The Buddha).

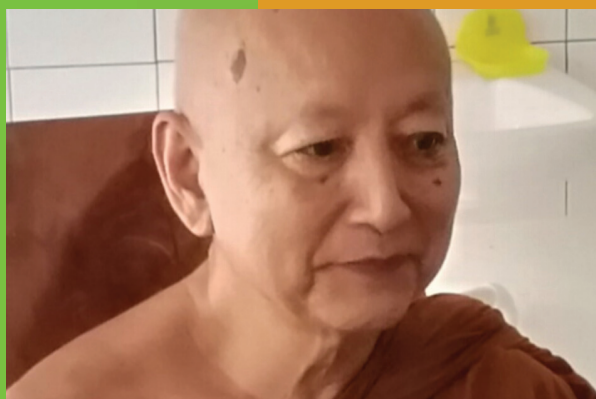
Velāma Sutta: About Velāma. AN 9.20. Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

‘Stream entry is suitable at any time and all times provided we listen to the original discourses of the Buddha. Because if you listen to some other teacher, unless the teacher bases his teachings on the original suttas, you might get wrong view.’

‘You see, we have good and bad kamma. When you sell drugs, you have to pay for it. When you donate, you get merit for that. These are two different accounts. You cannot say that one cancels the other.’

‘It all depends on who needs help more. If a poor family needs help and the monastery is well established and you give with a selfish intention, then your merit is less. If you give to a poor family and you get nothing in return that is more meritorious.’

‘This world arises from consciousness. If there is no consciousness, there is no world. So whether it is inside or outside, it is all a creation of the mind.’



‘Photo credit: David Ee.
Thanks also to David Ee and Tan Koon Hin for making this trip not only possible but also memorable and enjoyable.’

BL EVENT

BL EVENT: CHENG BENG MEMORIAL SERVICE

Date: April 1, 2018

Venue: BL Level 2 Auditorium

Photo Credit: Yeo Koon Teck



BL EVENT

BL EVENT: EIGHT PRECEPTS RETREAT

Date: March 30, 2018

Venue: BL Level 2 Auditorium

Led by Ven. Wan Chin

Photo Credit: Yeo Koon Teck



'Skillful virtues have freedom from remorse as their purpose, Ananda, and freedom from remorse as their reward.' ...Ananda, skillful virtues lead step-by-step to the consummation of arahantship."

*Kimattha Sutta: What is the Purpose? AN 11.1
Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu*



BL EVENT

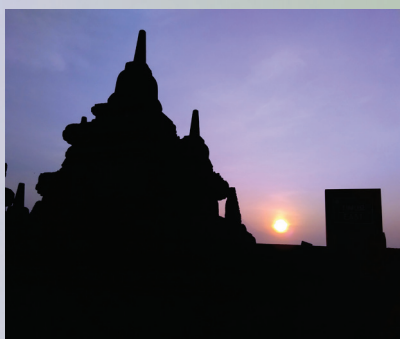
BL EVENT: PILGRIMAGE TRIP TO BORODUR. INDONESIA

Date: April 10 – 14, 2018

Venue: Borobudur, Jogjakarta Indonesia

Led by Dr Tham Weng Yew

Photo Credit: Yeo Koon Teck





BL EVENT

BL EVENT: MOTHERS' DAY LUNCH

Date: May 6, 2018

Venue: Hotel Royal@Queens

Photo Credits: Dr Wong Weng Fai, Yeo Koon Teck & Leila



在Velama经里，佛陀也述说他的前世做了很多善事。他布施的食物和饮料如同河流这么多。但即使如此，佛陀说如果他供养的是一位有正见的人，功德会更大。因为人如果没有正见就会造恶业，比如吸毒。

那些为了自己积功德才做善事的人又当如何？

在另一部经里，佛陀说如果你为了自私的企图而布施，你的功德会减少。当你布施的时候，应该要知道做善事是好事而随喜。当你布施时，不要发愿能投生为男子（或女子），或证悟或中彩票等。

您怎么看“布施给穷苦的人比布施给寺院要卑微”的说法

这就要看谁更需要帮助。如果你因为私心去帮助一间有名望的寺院而不去帮助一个需要援助的穷苦家庭，你的福报就会减少。你要是无私的去帮助那个穷苦家庭那福报就会增加。

“世界” 和意识

在这本《Early Buddhist Teachings – The Middle Position in Theory and Practice》，Y Karundasa 教授写到；

“佛陀不拒绝世间的现实主观。他拒绝的是超出界限的体验。”

是否佛陀在教我们这世上没有外在的世界，全都是我们的心在作祟？还是外在的世界的确存在，但我们以错误的方式去看待它？

这世界是由意识所造。如果没有意识，就没有世界。所以无论是里面或外面这都是心理作用。

到底我们看到的事物真实存在吗？

只要意识存在，它就存在。这全凭意识，有如做梦。当你做梦时，那是证真实的，只有梦醒时，你才会说它是不真实的。同样的，现在这个世界看起来很真。当你要死的时候，这个世界就开始消灭了。然后你又会看到另一个世界生起。就像转换电视频道一样。当另一个世界生起时，它又成了真实的了。

量子物理学目前也开始了解了这点。

但据我所知，量子物理学说观察者的存在会影响波浪的表现。但这不表示波浪不存在。它只是根据观察者存在与否而表现的不同而已。

佛陀说有两种看法。一种存在，一种不存在。

没错，他两种看法都拒绝。但您说如果意识不存在，世界就不存在，那您不是偏向灭见？

不，我是说世界存在是依靠意识。世界万物都是随因缘而生。这就是因缘的基本教义。没有任何东西是永恒的。

感恩师父。

Chwee Beng

编辑

*'These five are a person of integrity's gifts. Which five?
A person of integrity gives a gift with a sense of conviction.
A person of integrity gives a gift attentively.
A person of integrity gives a gift in season.
A person of integrity gives a gift with an empathetic heart.
A person of integrity gives a gift without adversely affecting himself or others.'*

Sappurisdana Sutta :

A Person of Integrity's Gifts (AN 5.148)

Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

'This was said by the Lord...

"Bhikkhus, if beings knew, as I know, the result of giving and sharing, they would not eat without having given, nor would they allow the stain of meanness to obsess them and take root in their minds. Even if it were their last morsel, their last mouthful, they would not eat without having shared it, if there were someone to share it with. But, bhikkhus, as beings do not know, as I know, the result of giving and sharing, they eat without having given, and the stain of meanness obsesses them and takes root in their minds."

Iti 17-19 Vagga Sutta Itivuttaka: The Group of Ones

Translated from the Pali by John D. Ireland

有四种入流分，它们是；

- 亲近善知识
- 听闻正法
- 如理思惟
- 法次法向

当我们成就它，我们就生起正见而入流。

有两种正见，世间正见和雅利安正见。雅利安正见是了解四圣谛。一旦了解四圣谛，就能了解无常，人生是苦，和无我。

当我们證得入流果位，我们会修得入流的四分；

- 对佛，法，僧坚定不移的信念
- 雅利安的七种美德（不杀生，不偷盗，不邪淫，不妄语，不两舌，不恶口，不绮语）

何谓坚定不移的信念？

坚定不移的信念不是迷信。信念是从对佛法的信任，信心，或理解所生起的。

如果一个人接受四圣谛和八正道但不相信鬼神，他是否有坚定不移的信念？

如果你不信鬼神，你就不信其他五道轮回，这表示你对佛法没有彻底的了解。所以你就没有坚定不移的信念。

佛陀说过当一个人證得入流果后，他们可以宣称自己到了这个境界。他们要如何宣称？

有七种分辨入流果位的因素；

- 他们的心不被五障影响（貪欲，瞋恚，睡眠，掉悔，懷疑）
- 他们能平心静气或集中精神。
- 他们的正见与外道不同。
- 他们喜欢听闻佛法。有的人只喜欢禅修，而不喜欢听闻佛法。
- 当他们听闻佛法时会法喜充满。
- 即使他们很忙碌，一有闲暇时间就会修佛法。
- 他们很直率。如果犯戒会立刻忏悔。

禅修

何谓“多余专注力”？原始佛经有提到“多余专注力”吗？它在修入流的训练中又起的什么效果？

原始佛经里没有提到多余专注力但佛陀提到一个在證得第一禅那前，破除五障的境界。

但你得小心。佛陀并没说在这境界内五障已完全消除。他只是说它们不再是障碍。五障降至非常低的水平。那时便可入第一禅那。

你不可执著于多余专注力。就好像一个要跳悬崖的人。他要跳入水里或落入山石上。你不能用它来做别的事情。

对于證得入流果位者，多余专注力本生并没有实在的用处。但如果你證得第一禅那，你就有资格成为证悟第二果位的斯陀含。

功德和积功德

我曾读过泰国报章关于一位贩卖毒品的年轻人。他认罪并且被逮捕。他因为把部分的赃款捐赠给寺院就觉得自己会没事。这是不是佛陀在经文里所指的“如果施主不贤德但受益者贤德，受供者的德行就能“净化”捐赠者？

当佛陀说受供者的德行能够“净化”捐赠者，他指的是让福报增加，而不是赦免施主的罪行。有时，我们在理解经文时要注意。

众人都要受好和坏的果报。当你贩卖毒品，你必须受恶报。当你捐赠，你就积福报。这是两码子的事。你不可以用福报来顶替恶报。

在佛教戒律的故事里，有一位證得阿罗汉果位，法力高强的比丘尼。她在森林里独自禅修。有一票匪徒偷了一些牛羊，路过比丘尼处。带头的匪徒切下一些肉供养她。当她出定后，回想了一下才知道出了什么事。就利用她的法力，飞去佛陀的住所并把肉供养给佛陀。那时佛陀出去化缘，她把肉交给看护佛陀的僧众；说佛陀会接纳的。你瞧，明知是偷来的肉却因出自于善意而接受了。

在《施分别经》里，佛陀从深入浅，列下了不同德行层次的人所积的福报。这不是令人困扰吗？因为人们就可以为了得到更多的福报而选择布施有名望的高僧，而非贫穷而有需要的一群？

非也。你必须与其他的经文来做比较。

在《施分别经》理，佛陀说供养僧众的福报要比供养佛陀还要多。所以一切都依你的心意而定。如果你供僧的原因是要护僧那是好事。当你有了僧众，你就能继续转法轮。如果失去了僧众，那就末法了。

主笔言论-与

Dhammavuddho Mahathera (Bhante Hye) 法师的对话

学习佛法最好的方法是阅读佛陀生前所教的经文。这样一来我们不但能学习佛陀亲口所教的方法，而且还是佛陀以大智大慧的人类身份所传述的。有时，还带有一些幽默。当经文里的故事情节令人感动和疑惑的时候，那也是一种难得的体验。

Dhakkina Vibhanga 经文从 Maha Pajapati Gotami（佛陀的养母）开始。她三次供养佛陀两批她亲手缝制的绸缎却被佛陀拒绝了。佛陀让她把绸缎供养给僧众，并告诉她“把绸缎供养给僧众吧。当你供养给僧众时，也等于供养我和僧众。”

那时，阿难尊者提醒佛陀，这么多年来他养母和佛陀是如何互相照顾对方。佛陀也同意这说法。他乘机解释了“十四种个人供养”，从供养佛陀至给与动物的供品。他强调接收者的德行和品格能增加施主的福报。但有趣的是佛陀并没有确定他最后是否接受养母的供养。我们只能推断他没有接受。

任何人第一次阅读经文时都会质疑为何被供养的人之德行和人品会影响施主的福报。这中间包含了许多问题。比如这是否会助长施主为了累积福报而只供养有名望的法师？正如佛陀在另一部经所说，如果意念也是因果，那施主的算计之心又当如何？为了做好事而布施才是最重要的吧？

Bhante Hye 为了弘扬佛陀最原始的教义，奉献一生出家为南传法师。他基本上已教完了所有能利益众生的佛经。

读过 Bhante Hye 的一生，我联想起另一个关于泰国禅师 Ajahn Chah 的采访。有人问他自己和其他法师有什么不同？他回复“我敢”。

今年三月份，我有幸采访在马来西亚，霹靂州乔达摩佛寺的 Hye 法师。在那里我有机会向他请教关于累积功德和其他对佛弟子重要的修行法门，尤其是入流。

入流

在 Veludvareyya 经里，佛陀教导一些婆罗门人佛教证悟的第一阶段，入流之道。这入流之道对现在今的在家弟子还适合吗？

入流在任何时间和时代都适合，前提是我们要听佛陀最原始的教义。要是听的是其他老师的教义，除非他们是根据佛陀的原始经典，不然的话会生起不正见。佛法永远都是五部《尼柯耶》，这是非常重要的。在《增支部4.180》，佛陀说“如有任何僧众说佛陀如此如此教课，不要接受也不要拒绝，而是用经和律对照。如果合乎经和律，那就合乎佛陀的教义。”

入流的因缘是正见。在《中尼柯耶43》，佛陀提到正见的两个因缘— 他人的声音和专注。如果你专注他人的声音学习佛陀所教的原始经典，你就能明白。你一旦明白就有了正见。你有了正见就入流了。那时你就会开始改变。这个改变需要时间。但在你死之前，这道将开花结果，也意味着你的智慧成熟。三结迎刃而解。这就是入流或须陀洹的象征。

在经典里，佛陀说的“流溪”指的是八正道。在《中尼柯耶112》，佛陀说我们只能由一个方法来进入八正道，那就是正见。你不可以从其他的方法入道。一旦有了正见，就会有正思维，正语，正业和正命。当你有了正见并入流时，你就会生起这五种正道。你如果继续精进的话，就可以修得第六和第七道，正精进和正念。这意味着我们每天都要往内观，观自己的毛病并且改进。这就是内观禅。佛陀说我们在行身，口，意之前，都应该反省会不会对自己或他人造成伤害。我们做任何事前都因该反省。当下做任何事时和事后都应该反省。这样一来，我们的三业就会净化。

在经典里，入流的教义是没有顺序的。为了我们的读者，您可否把入流的教义依照顺序排列出来？



达摩拉哒那法师开示 《出家》

今天我要谈关于巴利经文《增支部》。

在一次开示，佛陀与僧众谈到是什么想法令佛陀想要出家成佛。在这个开示里，我们可以学到关于我们这些凡夫的共同性格。

当佛陀还在行菩萨道的凡夫时，他得到了一些领悟导致他出家。佛陀提到三层骄傲。他虽然修了很多世的德行，但仍然不完美。他还有一些杂念。他有三层骄傲或玛那（巴利文）。玛那有很多意思，都和骄傲有关。

当我们要衡量东西的重量就会用秤。当我们要买蔬菜时，就会把蔬菜放在一端而另一端就会放铅块。我们就是用这个方法衡量菜的重量。这个秤也是玛那。

我们也尝试拿自己和别人做比较。比如一个健康的人觉得自己非常健康。他用自己跟另一个不是很健康的人做比较。有时我们也有这种念头但没有察觉而已。一个人年轻时，他会想“我很年轻，谁与谁都老了，我比较年轻。”当一个人很强壮，他会因为自己的体力而感到骄傲。当一个人有些财富，根据他的财富，他会产生一些玛那或骄傲。

当有人称赞我们说“你长的很健康，”我们就会很开心。开心是件好事但在这开心的背后有一点玛那。就这样，有很多日常生活的事情会让我们感到骄傲。在经文里，佛陀提到骄傲的三种原因。

第一种骄傲是身份地位所导致的。

“僧众，我年轻时过着皇族的生活，拥有三个宫殿。夏天有一座宫殿，冬天有一座宫殿，雨季时还有一座宫殿。随着季节的改变，我就会换宫殿。人们为我撑担白色的仪式伞。所到之处，都有人站在我后面撑担炫彩夺目的伞盖。有些季节，我不会离开宫殿。有很多年轻貌美的姑娘伺候我。我的衣裳全是出自于迦尸国，一个出产用金银针线缝制高质量丝绸的城市。就连我的鞋子也是用金银针线缝制，出自于迦尸国。我过着如此精彩的生活。我有些骄傲。

但有一天我在想，这些东西都不是永久的。我曾经看到一位因为生病而受苦的人。我就开始想。我意识到这个人曾经也年轻健康但现在却病的很重。因为生病而受苦。现在对他而言，没有什么比健康还重要。所以，身为王子的我拥有的东西都不珍贵。我没有任何理由对这些东西感到骄傲或执著。我就是看到这位病人才领悟这个道理。所以我决定离开皇宫的生活。”

后来佛陀也说他年轻的时候非常强壮。他锻炼过各种武术。

“我是一个能够打败任何人，非常强壮和武艺高强的勇士。但当我看到一位因为年老而受苦的人，我才发现有一天我也会像他一样。因为这个念头，我放弃了玛那。我选择放弃皇族的生活因为那不是永恒的。

我年轻的时候，我从没想过生命无常。我只想体验青春，享受美好物质。但有一天，我看见一具尸体。我就开始想，无论如何我都会像这个人一样面对死亡。所以我不需要感到骄傲。因为无论我是皇族与否，都得面对死亡。

所以，当我看到人生的病，老，死，我彻底的放下骄傲而决定出家。最后我悟道成佛。”

所以，人们会因为要了解世间的真相，财富或过的舒服生活，年轻力壮，好命或任何其他因素而导致玛那。如果这个人因为这些因素而导致玛那，他就永远也不会了解世间的真相。玛那是会阻碍人们了解真相。所以人不应该对这些事感到骄傲因为它们会改变的。所以我们不需要有玛那。

你可能觉得这是给僧众上的课。实际上是佛陀给我们所有人上的课。

最重要的是我们不应该以悲观的角度来听这忠告。拥有财富，健康，和长寿并没有什么错。这只是说我们对生命要实在一点，了解一切都是无常，并珍惜和分享，让他人也得到幸福快乐。

最后，我要引用佛陀在Sukhamala经所说的话来结尾；

“生老病死，凡人都排斥但自己又陷入其中。如果我也被这些凡人排斥，这样的生活就不适合我。我保持这样的态度，不增不减的了解佛法。我克服健康，青春，和生命的诱惑，视出家为休息。对我而言，能量涌现。明显的解脱。我不可能再会参与感官享受。过着圣洁的生活，我不会再堕落。”

我祝愿你的修行突飞猛进，法喜充满。

达摩拉哒那法师

宗教顾问

佛教图书馆