

成佛之道偈頌

VERSES OF THE WAY TO BUDDHAHOOD

第一章 歸敬三寶

自誓盡形壽

歸依佛法僧

至心修供養

時念諸勝利

此歸依最尊

此歸依最勝

不由餘歸依

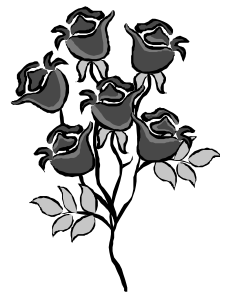
得樂得安隱

TAKING REFUGE

*"All my life I vow to take refuge in the  
Buddha, Dharma and Sangha,  
With utmost sincerity to make offerings,  
And to be mindful of all the extraordinary benefits."*

THE BENEFITS OF TAKING REFUGE

*Taking refuge in this way  
Is most highly honored and supreme.  
Taking refuge in other things will not  
Provide bliss and security.*



# 佛法

也如此：可變化的叫世，在時間之中，從過去到現在，現在到未來，有到沒有，好到壞，都是一直在變化，變化中的一切，都叫世間。

還有，世是蒙蔽的意思。一般人不明過去現在未來三世的因果，不知道從什麼地方來，要怎樣做人，死了要到那裡去，不知道人生的意義，宇宙的本性，糊糊塗塗在這三世因果當中，這就叫做世間。

怎樣才叫出世呢？出是超過或勝過的意思。能修佛法，有智慧，通達宇宙人生的真理，心裡清淨，沒有煩惱，體驗永恆的真理，就叫出世。佛菩薩都是在這個世界，但他們都是以無比智慧通達真理，心裡清淨，不像普通人一樣。

所以出世間這個名辭，是要我們修學佛法的，進一步能做到人上之人，從凡夫做到聖人，並不是叫我們跑到另外一個世界去。不了解佛法出世的意義，誤會佛教是逃避現實，而引起不正當的批評。

## 三、一切皆空：

佛說一切皆空，有些人誤會了，以為這樣也空，那樣也空，什麼都空，什麼都沒有，橫豎是沒有，無意義，這才壞事不幹，好事也不做，糊糊塗塗地看破一點，生活下去就好了。其實佛法之中空的意義，是有著最高深的哲理，諸佛菩薩就是悟到空的真理者。空並不是什麼都沒有，反而是樣樣都有，世界是世界，人生是人生，苦是苦，樂是樂，一切都是現成的。

# 切莫誤解 佛教

佛法之中，明顯地說到有邪有正，有善有惡，有因有果；要棄邪歸正，離惡向善，作善得善果，修行成佛，如果說什麼都沒有，那我們何必要學佛呢？既然因果、善惡、凡夫聖人樣樣都有，佛為什麼說一切皆空？空是什麼意義呢？

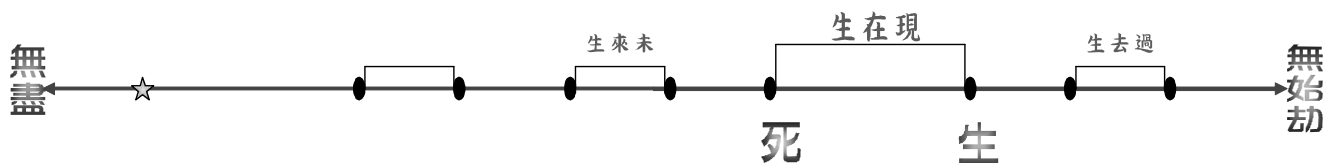
因緣和合而成，沒有實在的不變體，叫空。邪正善惡人生，這一切都不是一成不變實在的東西，皆是依因緣的關係才有的。因為是從因緣所產生，所以依因緣的轉化而轉化，沒有實體所以叫空。

舉一個事實來說吧，譬如一個人對著一面鏡子，就會有一個影子在鏡裡。怎會有那個影子呢？有鏡有人還要借太陽或燈光才能看出影子，缺少一樣便不成，所以影子是種種條件產生的，不是一件實在的物體，雖然不是實體，但所看到的影子，是清清楚楚並非沒有。

一切皆空，就是依這個因緣所生的意義而說的。所以佛說一切皆空，同時即說一切因緣皆有；不但要體悟一切皆空，還要知道有因有果有善有惡。學佛的，要從離惡行善，轉迷啟悟的學程中去證得空性，即空即有，二諦圓融。

一般人以為佛法說空，等於什麼都沒有，是消極，是悲觀，這都是由於不了解佛法所引起的誤會，非徹底糾正過來不可。

續下期…



## COMMON BUDDHIST

## MISUNDERSTANDINGS

*The* teachings of the Buddha are also as such: that which is changeable is called 'worldly'. Within this time frame, from the past to the present, from the present to the future, from existence to non-existence, from good to bad, everything is changing continuously. Anything that changes is called 'worldly'.

Besides, the word 'world' also has the meaning of concealment. Ordinary people do not understand the cause and effect of the past, present and future. They do not know where they come from, how to behave as human beings, where to go after death, the meaning of life and the nature of the universe. They live ignorantly under the influence of the Three Birth Theory of Cause and Effect. This is called 'worldly'.

What does 'out-worldly' (supra-mundane) mean? 'Out' has the meaning of beyond/transcend or superior. One who practices the teachings of the Buddha; has wisdom and is able to understand the truth of the life and universe; has no defilements and is pure in one's mind; and experiences the permanent Truth, is called the 'out worldly' one. All the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas appear in this world, however, they have great wisdom in seeing the Truth and their minds are pure. They are not like the normal 'worldly' people.

Thus, the term 'out worldly' encourages all of us who are practicing the Buddha's teachings to progress further and excel above the rest; to improve ourselves from a worldly person to an out-worldly sage. Due to the misunderstanding of this term 'out-worldly' in Buddhism, people think that it is teaching us to run away from reality. This has led to many inaccurate criticisms.

## 1.3 Emptiness

The Buddha says that everything is 'empty'. Some think that this is empty, that is empty, everything is empty and nothing exist. Since everything is empty and meaningless, one does not need to do either evil or good. Hence these people let go of everything without much thought, as long as they continue to live. In fact, 'emptiness' in Buddhism is the most profound philosophy. The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are the people who have realized the truth of emptiness. 'Emptiness' does not mean there is nothing at

all, in contrast, it includes everything; the world is the world, life is life, suffering is suffering, happiness is happiness, everything does (conditionally) exist.

The Buddhist teachings clearly states that there is right and wrong, good and evil, cause and effect. One should give up evil and turn toward righteousness, refrain from unwholesome and embrace wholesomeness. Those who do good deeds will reap good effects, and with practice one may attain Buddhahood. If we say that everything is empty, then why should we practice the teachings of the Buddha? Since karma, good and evil, worldly people and sages do exist, then why does the Buddha say that everything is empty? What is the meaning of 'emptiness'?

Things exist due to causes and conditions and do not have a real and unchangeable identity. Thus, they are 'empty'. Right and wrong, good and evil, and life exists due to causes and conditions, they are not permanent and unchangeable. Since their existence is dependent on causes and conditions, they continue to change with the changes of the causes and conditions. They do not have a permanent form, and therefore they are 'empty'.

For example, when one is facing a mirror, there will be an image in the mirror. How does the image come about? Besides having the mirror and person, sunlight or light is also needed in order for the image to appear. When one condition is missing, the image cannot be produced. The image is produced by a combination of various conditions. It is not a real thing. Although it is not real, it is very clear when we see it. We cannot say that it does not exist.

The concept of 'emptiness' relies on this truth that things arise due to causes and conditions. Thus, the Buddha says that everything is empty, but at the same time, he says that all causes and conditions do exist. Thus, we should not only realize that everything is empty, but should also understand that there is the Law of Cause and Effect and the existence of good and evil. A practicing Buddhist should learn to avoid all evils and do good deeds, and transform our delusion to wisdom, hence, realize the truth of emptiness. We should understand that emptiness and conditional existences are not contradicting each other. This is the perfect realization of the Two Truths.

People generally misunderstand the concept of emptiness in Buddhism and think that it means void and nothingness – it is negative and pessimistic. This misunderstanding arises due to the lack of knowledge regarding Buddhism. This situation must be rectified thoroughly.

To be continued ...

## 一、學佛即向佛學習

# 關於

從人到成佛的路，先得認識自己

是人。由人來學佛，應該學些什麼？要怎樣學？現在只能講一些重要的，淺顯的初步，使大家知道從人到成佛的關要。

佛法應從兩方面去了解：一方面是究竟理想，最高目的——成佛。另方面，因人的程度參差不齊，所以有種種方便法門，不同的修行方法，但最後終歸是成佛。這好像我們所走的路，有的平坦，有的高低不平，有的迂曲，有的直截了當。但如認清最後目標，還是「條條大路通長安」。今天所要講的，是從人到佛的路，直捷平坦的路；依此行去，不但穩當，又容易到達。

學佛，就是向佛學習，以佛為我們的模範而學。佛是怎樣修學而成的，我們也這樣照著學。所以真正的學佛，是：

### 1、不但為後世的福樂而學：

修行布施等功德，希望來生能比現在更好。這在佛法中，名為以「增進心」而學，目的在求來生的福樂果報，如生天國等。這只是佛法的方便法門，不是以佛為理想而學。這並不是說，學佛的不求來生的增進；在沒有成佛以前，當然希望能生於人天中，但這不是學佛的目的。大家要以成佛為目的，如真能依法做去，一定能得到的，只要我們有高超遠大的理想，與切實地遵行。

## 從人到成佛之路

為什麼生人生天不夠呢？因為不徹底、不究竟。生人間，財富、金錢、壽命、地位、人事，都在變化無常中，不徹底、不圓滿。

說生天吧，就是帝釋天（近於玉皇大帝）、大梵天（近於希伯來的耶和華），也還是不圓滿，還是在變化中，還是會墮落的。

相信耶和華上帝的，一定不同意這個見解，其實耶和華是不徹底的。以大梵天王為例吧，他說：萬物與人類，是他創造，從他而生的。我們要問：天地未創造以前是否有天地？人類未生以前是否有人類？假使是沒有，那為什麼要創出天地與人類呢？婆羅門教就有一種解說：「為了戲樂」。這是說，為了表示自我的自在（自由）、自我的滿足，所以從此而引生一切。這像一所新房子空洞而沒有什麼，覺得空虛而不滿意，就得買傢具花瓶等等來裝飾一下。所以，如說神能創生人類萬物，這只是表示他的「不甘寂寞」，顯示他內心的空虛，內心還有問題，不能無事。如人在繁忙的時候，會感覺到麻煩，希望能獨自地安安靜靜休息。可是真的給他幽靜的安息，又會感到空虛，又要出來眺望，靜極思動。為了自我的自由與滿足，要天地男女萬物，弄到無邊苦痛，真是自找麻煩。

所以，凡是內心有不足而有所要求的，就表示內心有問題，不徹底。學佛的說到修行了生死，不但要在萬人喧囂處安住而無所不足，還要能於無人處自靜其心，做到名符其實的「無事道人」。神教所想像的神，還有要求，不能心安，便是要墮落的主要理由，所以我們不能以此為正確的路子。

續下期...

諸行無常 諸法無我 涅槃寂靜

All existence and phenomena are subject to change,  
All existence and phenomena do not have any substantial reality,  
The eternally serene state of Nirvana.

## 1. To practice Buddhism is to Learn from the Buddha

## The Path from Human to Buddhahood

*In* discussing the Path from Human to Buddhahood, we must first recognize that we are human beings. As human beings who would like to practice Buddhism, what are the things that we should learn? How should we learn? I will now touch on some of the important and simple basic steps so that everyone can know the key to practice from a human being to Buddhahood.

We should try to understand the Buddha's teachings from two aspects. First, the ultimate ambition and goal of practicing Buddhism is to attain Buddhahood. Second, because of variations in individual's foundation and standard, there are many skilful means and different ways for an individual to practice. However, the ultimate aim of all practices is to attain Buddhahood. This resembles the roads that we are walking on, some walk on smooth roads, some walk on roads full of bumps and pits, some follow the winding tracks, while others follow a straight and direct path. As long as we are clear on our final destination, then: "All these roads will lead us to Rome." Now I would like to discuss with everyone the Path from Human to Buddhahood. This is the direct and smooth path. Not only is this path reliable, it is also the easier path that leads us to our goal.

To practice Buddhism is to learn from the Buddha and to have the Buddha as our role model. We should follow in the footsteps of the Buddha and learn the best methods of attaining Buddhahood from him. Thus the real purpose of practicing Buddhism is as follow:

### 1.1 To practice Buddhism for more than just Worldly Merits and happiness in Future Lives.

Some people perform meritorious deeds such as alms giving; hoping that their future lives will be better than the present one. In Buddhism, this is to practice with a 'mind to improve oneself'. The objective is to secure good merits and good karma for the future life, for example, to be reborn in heaven. However, this is only a skilful means in Buddhism, it does not regard Buddhahood as the goal. A point to clarify here is that this does not mean that when we practice Buddhism, we do not seek to improve our future life. Before we attain Buddhahood we will, of course, hope to be reborn in the heaven or human realms, but this should not be the ultimate aim of following the Buddha. We should look upon the attainment of Buddhahood as our aim. If we practice according to the teaching of the Buddha, and have the great and long term ambitions to carry out the Buddha's advice diligently and accurately, our aim will then undoubtedly be achieved.

One may ask why it is not satisfactory to just seek rebirth as a human or a heavenly being? This is because it is not perfect nor ultimate. It is imperfect to be born in the human realm because in this realm our wealth, money, life-span, status, and personal relationships are in constant change.

They are neither ultimate nor perfect.

To be born in heaven is equally imperfect. Even beings in the realm of heaven such as the Sakradevanam (resembles the Jade Emperor in Taoism) and Mahabrahman (resembles Jehovah of the Hebrews) experience constant changes in their lives and will one day again regress from heaven.

Those who believe in heavenly beings will certainly disagree with this point, but in actual fact, heavenly beings are not ultimate. Take the Mahabrahman (an Indian God) for instance. He claimed that all things, including human beings were created by him and were born from him. Let us ask, was there a heaven and earth before heaven and earth were created? Were there human beings before human beings were created? If not, then, why should heaven, earth and human beings be created? The Brahman's answer is "For the sake of having fun." That is, all the creations are just a show of ego-freedom and self-satisfaction for the Mahabrahman. This is like a new but vacant house that gives one a feeling of hollowness and dissatisfaction. Thus it must be decorated by furniture, vases and so on. Therefore, to say that human beings and all other things are created by God implies that this God does not like to be lonely. He feels loneliness in himself, and therefore his mind is not at peace. For example, when a person is very busy, he/she feels impatient and hopes that they can be left alone to rest quietly, but when they are actually given a quiet rest, they feel lonely and want to be somewhere again. In other words, in order to fulfil his self-satisfaction and enjoyment, the Mahabrahman wanted heaven and earth, human beings, and all things. As a result of that, he created endless suffering for all. He was, in fact, looking for trouble for himself.

A person who possesses a discontented and demanding mind is obviously not at peace and is not perfectly liberated. When a follower of Buddha talks about cultivation of mind and the liberation from life and death, his or her aim is to feel contented anywhere, whether amidst a buzzing crowd or in an utterly deserted place. It is practitioner who is peaceful and free from attachment everywhere. The Gods in theistic religions are not free from desires, their minds are not yet at peace and this is the most important cause for their descent from heaven in the future. Therefore, we cannot adopt this way as our right path.

To be continue....

# 盂蘭盆會

佛

說：父母對於我們，恩德是大極了！做兒女的，一定要孝順父母，報父母的恩德。你雖然盡心力去孝敬，也還是報不盡父母的恩。



做孩子的，要聽父母的話，使父母歡喜。長大了，要好好的立身做事，孝養父母，使父母身心安樂。父母死了，也要紀念父母，使父母離苦得樂。

從前，佛的大弟子目連尊者，得道以後，知道他的母親，因為不信三寶，殺害生靈，死後墮在餓鬼中受苦。



目連孝心懇切，卻沒有能力救她，只得請佛設法。佛說：「七月十五日，是佛歡喜日。在這一天，如能誠懇的布施，供佛及僧，憑這供佛的布施功德，得到一切佛的護念，才能度脫鬼趣的苦難」。

這就是盂蘭盆法會的來源。盂蘭盆，是救倒懸的意思。七月十五日，佛教舉行盂蘭盆法會，這一天恰好是中國的「中元」節。從此，每逢中元節，民間都舉行盂蘭盆會，可說是佛教的孝親節了。

佛教對過去祖先的憶念、救護，比起儒家的「慎終追遠」，要懇切得多，徹底得多！比起神教徒，對於死後的祖先父母，毫無憶念救護的孝心，高尚偉大得多了！

## The Ullambana Service Ceremony

The Buddha said that we owe great gratitude to our parents. As children, we should show filial piety and respect to our parents in appreciation of their help to us. Our parent's love, kindness, and support, has been so great, that even if we tried to show our filial piety to the fullest, it would still be impossible for us to repay them for their efforts.

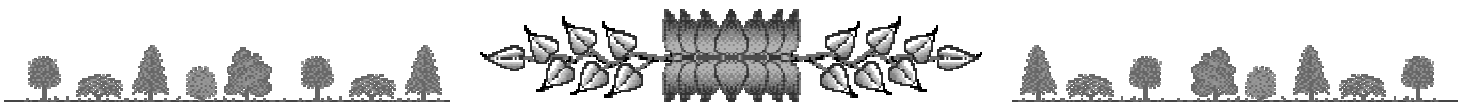
As children, we should listen to the advice of our parents. Once grown up, we should learn to be independent and work hard. We should show our respect and filial piety to our parents so that they may feel comforted and gratified for all their sacrifices. After the death of our parents, we should remember their kindness, and hope that they are relieved from their sufferings and are happy.

In the past, there was a great disciple of the Buddha, the Noble Maudgalyayana. After his enlightenment, he knew that due to his mother's disbelief in the Triple Gem, and her habit of killing living creatures, she was reborn in the realm of hungry ghosts and suffered tremendously.

Although Maudgalyayana was sincere in helping her, he was unsuccessful. He went to the Buddha for advice. The Buddha said, "The fifteenth day of the seventh month is the Happy Day for Buddhas." We can practice dana sincerely on this day, and make offerings to the Buddha and the Sangha. With the merits of our offerings, we may gain the sympathy and assistance of the Buddhas and be relieved from the sufferings in the realms of the hungry ghosts."

This is the origin of the Ullambana Service. The word "Ullambana" means "to redeem the upside down" (i.e. to save from the suffering of hanging upside down. In other words, to help save those who have had bad rebirth due to their past bad karma.) On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, the Buddhist community performs the Ullambana service ceremony. This coincides with the Chinese "Ghost Festival". Every year during the "Ghost Festival", communities organize Ullambana services. This is the filial-piety day in Buddhism.

In Buddhism, remembrance and efforts for the ancestors are very sincere and thorough. In Confucianism, there is less emphasis of these aspects in the funeral rites for parents, and the worship of ancestors. Theists show no remembrance nor effort of salvaging for their ancestors.





# 法緣學處

*Dharma Pratyaya Lecture Hall*

時間：每星期六下午 2:30~4:30pm

地點：373 9<sup>th</sup> Street, #505 Oakland, CA 94607  
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學佛道上，互相砥礪，共同成長。

(語言：中文、粵語)

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