



Indestructible Faith in the Buddha Dhamma and the Benefits of Practicing Dhamma in Daily Life

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ABSTRACT:

The teachings of Buddhism are considered to be Dhamma treasures for Buddhists, because these are precious teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha Dhamma's great value to help people to transform greed, hatred, and delusion, and liberate suffering, attains Nirvana, peace, and happiness in daily life. Buddhist teachings are contained in the Suttas (instructions of the Buddha), the Vinaya (the precepts applicable to Buddhists), the Abhidhamma (discussions and explanations of the Suttas and Disciplines). Through the practice of Buddhist teachings, Buddhists can develop morality, concentration, and wisdom, thereby achieving enlightenment and liberation.

The Buddhist teachings contain basic principles that can answer all of life's problems. Therefore, when they apply these principles to their personal and social lives, they will find relevant answers. Moreover, they believe that practicing the teachings helps them both improve their moral life, perfect their personality, and bring joy and happiness in the present and in the future.¹ Therefore, life only has meaning when each person has faith, once we lose faith or have no faith, we are just nothing. For Buddhists, belief in the Three Jewels plays a very important role. This belief will help people to know the direction of Truth, Goodness and Beauty, help us see all problems more accurately and know how to live more meaning fully. It is main objective of this paper.

Keywords: Buddha Dhamma, Indestructible Faith, Benefits of Dhamma, and Practice of Dharma in Daily Life.

1. Introduction

The teachings of Buddhism are considered to be Dhamma treasures for Buddhists. The main reason is, it's considered as a Dhamma treasure, because, these are precious teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha Dhamma's great value to help people to transform greed, hatred, and delusion, and liberate suffering, attains Nirvana, peace, and happiness in daily life. Buddhist teachings are contained in the Suttas (instructions of the Buddha), the Vinaya (the precepts applicable to Buddhists), the Abhidhamma (discussions and explanations of the Suttas and Disciplines). Through the practice of Buddhist teachings, Buddhists can develop morality, concentration, and wisdom, thereby achieving enlightenment and liberation.

Buddhists believe that Buddhist teachings contain basic principles that can answer all of life's problems. Therefore, when they apply these principles to their personal and social lives, they will find relevant answers. Moreover, they believe that practicing the teachings helps them both improve their moral life, perfect their personality, and bring joy and happiness in the present and in the future. According to the Mahayana treatise titled *Ratnagotravibhāga* (Analysis of the Jeweled Lineage), the true meaning of the triple gem is as follows:² The Dhamma is described as the reality which is cessation. This is described as neither existence nor non-existence. It is non-conceptual reality as well as the reality of the path which consists of luminous and stainless jñāna that removes all defilement. It is also equated with the dharmakaya.³

Life only has meaning when each person has faith, once we lose faith or have no faith, we are just nothing. For Buddhists, belief in the Three Jewels plays a very important role. This belief will help people to know the direction of Truth, Goodness and Beauty, help us see all problems more accurately and know how to live more meaning fully.

¹ Hookham, S. K. (1991), *The Buddha within: Tathagatagarbha doctrine according to the Shentong interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

² Hookham, S. K. (1991), *The Buddha within: Tathagatagarbha doctrine according to the Shentong interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, pp. 186–190, ISBN 978-0791403587.

³ Hookham, S. K. (1991), *The Buddha within: Tathagatagarbha doctrine according to the Shentong interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhaga*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

2. What is faith?

You may have heard somewhere; the most powerful thing is belief. So what is faith? There are many concepts about trust. Belief is how you feel and believe in something. It can be right, it can be wrong, it can be good but it can also be bad, but you believe it and it will definitely happen in the direction you think. Beliefs are many, but here we only analyze beliefs in Buddhism.

The Mahāvaiṣṭya Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra said:

“Faith is the root of the Way, the mother of all merits, nurtures all good Dharma’s, cuts off the net of doubt, leads people to cross the waters of craving, and reveals the supreme path leading it to Nirvana”.

The above examples show that faith is very important in Buddhism, is the starting point of the process of cultivation to attain enlightenment. In Buddhism, faith (Pali: saddhā, Sanskrit: śraddhā) refers to a serene commitment to the practice of the Buddha’s teaching and trust in enlightened or highly developed beings, such as Buddha’s or bodhisattvas (those aiming to become a Buddha). Buddhists usually recognize multiple objects of faith, but many are especially devoted to one in particular, such as one particular Buddha. Faith may not only be devotion to a person, but exists in relation to Buddhist concepts like the efficacy of karma and the possibility of enlightenment.

In Pali, faith is called Satta, but this belief must be righteous faith (正信), which means that it comes from the understanding of wisdom, not blindly following superstition. According to Venerable Thich Tri Quang: *“Righteous faith is believing in Buddhism and verifying it by science”*.⁴ Belief in Buddhism is based on the process of our own practice to have the experience; right faith is the first gateway to Great Enlightenment, because thanks to that, our mind is always steadfast and undaunted. The purpose of the Buddha directed righteous faith for Buddhists to *“achieve wisdom, not just believe and stop at faith”*⁵ Buddhist learners cannot lack faith and understanding of the Three Jewels, truth, cause and effect, Bodhi, means, and teachings of the Buddha.⁶ According to Buddhism, right faith is to believe in the natural laws of the human universe: becoming-tenability-destruction-emptiness, birth-tenability- difference- cessation, birth-age- sickness- and- death, believing in:

“believe that the death is not ending or returning to the realm of immortality, but depending on each person’s karma to be reborn in the samsaric realms, believe in the Buddha-Dharma-Sangha, believe in the truths the Buddha pointed out in the sutras and practical Buddha’s teaching about the Noble Eightfold Path”,⁷

It is helping practitioners to follow the right path towards the goal of liberation from suffering, benefiting themselves in the present and in the future. Right faith is the core issue of Buddhist learners, creating an opportunity for each person to come back to come in close contact with his own inherent pure nature, so, *“If one has pure faith in his heart, then he can enter the Buddha-dharma. If he does not believe, he cannot enter the Buddha-dharma.”*⁸

In *“Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana”* says: *“Generate faith in the ordinary mind itself. From that ordinary mind, we will go the Buddha land, just as bodhisattvas are going, and will come as the Buddhas have come”*.⁹

Strong faith in oneself, realizing the pure mind which is not born and does not die. The ultimate goal of liberation from birth and death is based on listening, contemplation and practice, that is, people listen to the teachings of the Dharma, practice the Dharma and find it beneficial, cultivate the Dharma to end all afflictions, clean up sins, and reach Nirvana, calm and peaceful. Firm belief is the basis of success, conquering the mind, conquering the wandering mind, is the source of all good deeds.

True faith is true freedom, not being forced, or driven by greed, hatred, or delusion. Cultivation and learning must go hand in hand, thereby generating solid faith, distinguishing right and wrong, right and wrong clearly, no longer falling into superstition or being lured. The unchanging belief in the Three Jewels is seeing the beneficial value for human life in society.

The Buddha advised the Bhikkhus:

*“Bhikkhus! Be heirs of my Dharma, not heirs of wealth. I have compassion for you and I think, how can my disciples, are heirs of My Dharma, not heirs of wealth.”*¹⁰ *“The venerable Gotama is like one who rebuilds what has fallen, exposes what is hidden, shows the way to those who have gone astray, brings light into the darkness, so that those who have eyes can see form”*.¹¹

⁴ Venerable Thich Tri Quang, Righteous Faith in Buddhism.

⁵ Thich Hanh Binh (2009), Buddha and the problems of the times, Oriental Publishing House, Ho Chi Minh City, p. 34.

⁶ See more: Thich Hanh Binh (2007), Buddhism and life, Oriental Publishing House, Ho Chi Minh City, p. 185-188.

⁷ The Eightfold Path is the fourth truth of the Four Noble Truths. Consists of eight elements important to practice bring the practitioner to enlightenment liberation: + Right view (P. Sammāditthi, C. 正見); + Right Thought (P. Sammāsankappo, C. 正思唯); + Right Speech (P. Sammāvaca, C. 正語); + Right Action (P. Sammākammanto, C. 正業); + Right Livelihood (P. Sama ājivo, C. 正命); + Right effort (P. Samāvayamo, C. 正精進); + Right Mindfulness (P. Samāmsati, C. 正念); + Right Concentration (P. Samāmasāmdhi, C. 正定).

⁸ Translated by Thich Thien Sieu, 1997, Maha Prajnāpāramitā sastra, volume I, Institute Research Buddhist Vietnam published, Ho Chi Minh City, p. 38.

⁹ Asvaghosha Bodhisattva, Cao Huu Dinh translates and explains. Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana, Thuan Hoa Hue Publishing House, 1996, p. 18.

¹⁰ Dhammadāyāda Sutta, vol I, Van Hanh University, 1973, p. 12.

“Dhammadāyādāme bhikkhave bhavathamā āmisadā yādā; atthi me tumheṣu anukampā; kintime savaka dhamma dāyādā bhaveyyum no āmisadāyādāti”.

¹¹ Majjhima Nikaya, (Collection of Middle Length Discourses) Volume I, Van Hanh University, 1973, p. 39.

Trust and rely on the Dharma, which is the Buddha's earnest and sincere appeal to his disciples. And Vasubandhu himself expressed this trust and refuge: *"Relying on the Buddha is taking refuge in the unlearned Dharma that produces the qualities of a Buddha. The refuge in the Sangha is the refuge in the two Dharma studies and unlearned practices that make up the qualities of a monk. To take refuge in the Dharma is to rely on the Dharma to deserted Nirvana. This is what is called the three complete refuges."*¹²

Those who have faith in the Dharma, the Buddha said: *"Just as a person who has his hands in a treasure mountain can freely take treasures. Likewise, a person with pure faith in the Dharma, when If you enter the treasure mountain of the Dharma, you will reap freely, and receive the unstained roots, the unstained powers, the unstained meditations, and the unstained wholesome Dharmas."*¹³

To better understand the faith in the Three Jewels, the writer will go into a brief study and analysis of this aspect. So, what believes in Dharma?

3. The Concept of the Dhamma

In Pāli, the word 'Dharma' called 'Dhamma' and in Sanskrit called 'Dharma'. Dharma comes from the root verb *dhṛ*, which means to maintain, to protect, and to preserve to exist. Dharma means preservation, maintenance, protection, principle of life, principle of all existence, and principle of sustaining all things.

The word Dharma is not a language only found in Buddhism. It has appeared since the times of the Rig Veda, and the Upanishads,¹⁴ Dharma has other meanings. Again, Sāriputta, the noble disciple who has attained unwavering faith in the Dharma: *"The Dharma is well taught by the Blessed One, practical in the present, has no time, comes to see, is capable of going upwards, understood by the wise themselves"*.¹⁵ This is the second highest state of bliss presently attained by purifying the mind that is not yet pure, by clearing the mind that is not yet clear.

In the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*, the Buddha taught Bhikkhus there are two extremes that practitioners should avoid:

1. The looseness according to the sex (*Kāmasukhallikā-nuyoga*) is lowly, vulgar, profane, and useless, not worthy of saintly qualities.
2. Enthusiasm and stubbornness in ascetic practice, mortification (*Attakilamathānuyoga*) is suffering that is useless, not worthy of the virtues of the Saints.

Abandoning these two extremes, the Tathagata (Tathāgata) has realized the Middle Way, which brings vision (Cakkhu) and knowledge (Jñāna), leads to tranquility (*Rupasamāya*) and transcendental wisdom. (*Abhiññaya*), leading to Enlightenment and Nirvana.¹⁶ In life, sometimes people are too hungry for sex, so they have turned themselves into lowly, vile people and animals. And sometimes people are too afraid of suffering and want to escape suffering, so they torture themselves with methods of mortification and asceticism. But, all of these actions do not lead people to a place free from suffering. The escape from suffering can only happen when people know how to give up greed, anger, wrong views and self-grasping.

In order to avoid such bad situations, as a Buddhist disciple should trust, study, and practice the Buddha's Dhamma, and trust it, as a path of integration, dissolution, and freedom from entanglements by extremes, in order to realize for oneself and others a life of Liberation and Enlightenment. Because of this belief, the Buddha's disciple must know what the Dharma includes and how to practice the Dharma correctly and with the best results.

3.1 The Meaning of Dhamma

In Buddhism Dharma apart from these basic meanings, it is also used to describe dynamic and static, concrete and abstract, physical and spiritual meanings. In the *Atthasalini*, Buddhaghosa explained that Dharma has four meanings:

1. Dharma means teaching (*Pariyāta*), which was taught by the Buddha for forty-five years. So, Dharma is the teaching of Buddha.
2. Dharma means the cause and effect (*Hetupratīya*), which means that all existence is due to the mutual influence of causes and conditions. So, Dharma means mutual interaction.
3. Dharma means quality (*Guṇa*), which means what is inside, maintaining things to exist. Therefore, Dharma is the essence, the principle.
4. Dharma means phenomena (*Rissatani - jirata*), which means concrete appearances outside. Thus, Dharma is manifest and differentiated.

Therefore, everything that the Buddha preached for forty-five years was called Dharma by his disciples.

"Seyyathapibho Gotama nikujjitam vā, ukkujjeyya paticchannam vā virareyya, mūlhassa vā maggam ācikkeyya, andhakāre vā telepajjotam dhāreyya, cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhintīti...".

¹² *Abhidharmakośa-śāstra* (阿毗達磨俱舍論) volume 14, Taishō Tripitaka - (大正新脩大藏經) 29, page 76b.

¹³ Refer *Maha Prajñāpāramitā sastra*, volume 1, Taishō Tripitaka - (大正新脩大藏經) 25, page 63.

¹⁴ Thich Thai Hoa "Indestructible Faith in the Dharma", Proof: Elder Venerable Master: Thich Huyen Quang, Thich Duc Nhuan. Hong Phuc Publishing House, p. 14.

¹⁵ *Anguttara Nikaya*, (Collection of Gradual Sayings) vols IV, translated by Thich Minh Chau (1997), chapter X, Ten Laws, Articles Men laypeople, (II), (92) Fear and hatred, Institute of Research Buddhist Studies Vietnam, HCM. p 489.

¹⁶ *Mahavagga*, p 10; *Samyutta Nikāya* (Collection of Kindred Sayings) vol V, p 420.

“Our Dharma takes the Blessed One as the basis, the Blessed One as our guide, the Blessed One as our guide” (= *Bhagavam mūlakāno bhante dhammā Bhagavam nettikā Bhagavam patisaraṇā*).¹⁷

After the Buddha entered Nirvana, that Dharma was gathered and developed by his disciples many times; the system was divided into three Pitakas, including the Sutta Pitaka, Vinaya Pitaka and Abhidhamma Pitaka. The Sutta Pitaka is a record of all that the Buddha preached during his lifetime. The Vinaya Pitaka is recorded including the Precepts (Sīla) and the Laws (Vinaya). However, the Vinaya Pitaka is mostly drawn from the Suttas, so Tibetan Buddhist scholars only divide Buddhist literature into two parts, the Sutta and Abhidhamma.¹⁸

The Abhidhamma is a record of the interpretations and expanding method of the concise and esoteric ideas of the Sutras and Vinaya, by Buddhist philosophers. In a broad sense, the Dharma includes the entire Tripitaka, whose content is to satisfy all the aspiration towards the life of liberation and enlightenment of all sentient beings. In a consistent sense, Dharma is the Dharma of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths. Therefore, here only a brief talk about Dependent Origination, and the Four Noble Truths.

3.2 The Dependent Origination

The Dependent Origination in Sanskrit is Pratīya-samutpāda. Pratīya is the direction to: that is, one towards that and the other towards this. Chinese translate Pratīya as (Condition) and English translate as Condition.

In the Māhyamika, Nāgārjuna explains the word Pratīya: “*Utpadyate pratīyemān iṣṭe pratyayaḥ kīla*”,¹⁹ which means the condition for the other to arise is called Dependent. Samutpāda means the origination, co-arising, co-occurring. In the Commentary on the Righteous Truth, venerable Chung Hien explained the meaning of Dependent Origination as: this exists, the other exists; as this arises, the other arises, that is the meaning of Dependent Origination.²⁰

In the Madhyamika, Nāgārjuna stated directly the meaning of dependent origination: “*I declare that: Any dharma that arises dependently, that dharma is emptiness, that dharma is also pseudo-name, that dharma is also the Middle Way.*” (= *Yañ pratīya samutpādaḥ śūnyatām pracakṣmahe, śaprajñāptir upādāyapratipat saiva madhyamā*).²¹ So, the twelve causes and conditions are:

1. Ignorance

The meaning of ignorance in Pāli is Avijja and Sanskrit is Avidya. Ignorance is no understanding, no learning, no comprehending, and no discernment. According to the Sutra and Abhidhamma, Ignorance (Avidya) is the lack of clarity and misperception of the truth.

Ignorance is the wrong perception of life, of all things. For example, life is impermanent but is considered permanent; everything is not-self, lively, but considered to be self-existent, eternal; all things arise is due to the interaction of causes and conditions that assume that all things are born from an omnipotent being... Such false perceptions are called Ignorance perceptions.

The Buddha said: “*For anyone, the defilements have not been eradicated, the defilements related to sorrow, arising defiled-existence, fearful, leading to the fruit of suffering, leading to birth, old age, and death in the future. That we call delusion.*”²²

2. Volitional Actions

In Pali, it is called Samkhara and in Sanskrit it is called Saṃskāra. Saṃskāra means activity, action, operation...according to Abhidharma Buddhism, the actions of body and speech are completely directed by Thought or Will (cetanā). The motive force for the three kammās to function is Samkhara. Therefore, Samkhara is a force of repulsion, so Samkhara consists of three, namely, mental action, body action, and speech action.

In short, Samkhara is dependent on Ignorance, the person or being is immersed in samsara. On the contrary, Samkhara that depend on the Noble Path will lead people or living beings to a life of liberation and enlightenment. And Samkhara that depend on Bodhi Mind will definitely lead people or living beings to the path and fruition of Unsurpassed Bodhi. According to Buddhaghosa, Samkhara takes activity as its sign, effort as its use, volition as its motive, and ignorance as its condition.²³

3. Consciousness

In Pali, it is called Viññāna and in Sanskrit it is called Vijñāna. Vijñāna comes from the root verb Vi-jñā which means to distinguish. Consciousness underlies all distinctions, all understanding. If there is no Consciousness there is no understanding, there is no all understandings.

¹⁷ Vīmāmakasuttam – Majjhima Nikāya vol 1. Van Hanh University, 1973, P.317.

¹⁸ Thich Thai Hoa “Indestructible Faith in the Dharma”, Proof: Elder Venerable Master: Thich Huyen Quang, Thich Duc Nhuan. Hong Phuc Publishing House, p. 15.

¹⁹ Mādhyamika - Pratyaya - Parīkṣa gāthas.

²⁰ Abhidharma - Nyāyanusara, volume 25, Great Tripitaka 29, page 481b.

²¹ Saccakā Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya, (Collection of Middle Length Discourses) Vols I, Van Hanh University, 1973, p. 249.

²² Saccakā Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya, (Collection of Middle Length Discourses) Vols I, Van Hanh University, 1973, p. 249.

²³ The Visuddhimagga XVII, (The Path of Purification), is the “great treatise” on Buddhist practice and Theravāda Abhidhamma written by Buddhaghosa, p.528.

All the seeds of good and evil, (āsrāva) impure and (anāsrāva) pure are stored by this Consciousness and not lost. This consciousness is also the consciousness of rebirth, that is, the consciousness that continues the life stream of another life. The sutras called Patasandhi-Viññā, which means the continuity between this life and the next. Buddhists who study Abhidharma call it the Ultimate Mind²⁴. Mr. Udilanka called birth part transfer.²⁵ And the Mind Only Mahayanas call it Alaya Vijñāna, which means consciousness that contains and preserves all the seeds. This consciousness is often deluded by sentient beings to be its own self.

4. Mental and physical phenomena

Mental and physical phenomena are a linking noun, a synthesis between spirit and matter. These two factors are the necessary conditions to form a being in the Desire Realm and the Rupa Realm. The mental formation element is called Nama; the element of matter is called Rupa.

Nama and Rupa, in the Twelve Dependent Originations, we must understand, are the Alaya consciousness and the Manna consciousness. And it is these two consciousnesses that link and interact with Rupas for the arising of the six faculties.

5. Six Faculties

The Pali language is Salāyatana, which are the six inner faculties. In the Abhidharma it is said that “*Mental and physical phenomena are the refuge and the foundation of the Six Faculties*”.²⁶ Here, the sign of the six faculties is the six sense organs, the use of the six faculties is to contact the six sense objects, and the condition of the six faculties is nama-rupa. Due to dependence on the six faculties, contact arises.

6. Contact

In Pāli, it is called ‘Phassa’ and in Sanskrit called ‘Sparsā’, which means contact, relationship, involvement, communication, and harmony between the faculties, objects, and cases of perception. And contact arises by taking the six faculties as conditions, as a refuge, and as a place of establishment.²⁷

7. Feeling

The meaning of this word in Pāli and Sanskrit are both Vedana. It means knowing, perceiving, feeling, sensation...

In the sutras, the Buddha told Ananda that:

“If contact doesn't have any kind, anywhere, like eye contact, ear contact, nose contact, tongue contact, body contact, mind contact; if contact doesn't exist for all, if contact stops, can feeling exist?”

The Blessed One, no.

*Such, Ananda, is the cause, such is the condition, such is the origination, and such is the cause and condition of feeling, which is contact.”*²⁸ Venerable Moggallāna said: *“Feeling arises with contact as its condition, with contact as its refuge, and with contact as its establishment”*.²⁹

8. Desire

In Pali it is called ‘Tanha’, in Sanskrit it is called ‘Triṣṇā’. It means thirst, longing, craving. According to Moggallāna, *“Desire is for the sense objects, to be watched by the mind, to arise the bondage of greed, and from one bondage to another, from growth and increase, from attachment intensity becomes more and more intense, from fullness becomes more and more full. That's called desire”*.³⁰

Therefore, in order to eliminate the thirst for craving, it is necessary to eliminate ignorance. Whenever Ignorance is completely absent, Nirvana is completely present.

9. Clinging

Both Pali and Sanskrit are called ‘Upādāna’. It means to admit, to contain, to accept, to cling, to hold... So, Upādāna is to cling to and embrace to anything that the process of thirsting for Tanha has been intense. In the Abhidharma, it is called *“Clinging is the stage of intense growth of craving”*.³¹

Thus, Upādāna is arisen by craving, if craving is absent, clinging does not arise from anywhere. But, if Upādāna is present, it is a condition for Becoming to arise.

10. The Process of Becoming

²⁴ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 11, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 507.

²⁵ Commentary on Dependent Birth, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka 3240, p. 483b.

²⁶ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 11, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 509.

²⁷ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 11, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 509.

²⁸ Mahānidāna Sutta, Digha Nikaya, (Collection of long Discourses) Vols III, Van Hanh University, 1972. p. 62.

²⁹ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 12, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka, p. 501.

³⁰ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 12, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka, p. 511.

³¹ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 11, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 511.

The meaning of this word both in Pali and Sanskrit are called Bhava, means become to exist. According to the Nikāya Sutras and the Samyutta Nikayas, there are three types of Becoming (Bahva), namely, Desire Becoming (Kāmahava), Form Becoming (Rūpabhava) and Formless Becoming (Arūpabhava).

Abhidharma Dharma-skandha-pada calls Becoming (Bhava) a Karma Becoming (Karmabhava) and defines it as follows: “*The mind is bound by greed, hatred, and delusion, forming three karmas of body, speech, and mind. The three evil karmas are called karma becoming*”.³² Therefore, in order to be free from the suffering of samsara, one must get rid of the Desire Becoming, Form Becoming and Formless Becoming. If Becoming (Bhava) has not been eliminated, then Becoming (Bhava) again serves as a condition for Birth to arise and be present.

11. Birth

In Pali, it is called ‘Jati’ and in Sanskrit it is called ‘Jāta’, which means to arise, to appear, to arise from, to revive, to grow again. The Buddha said to Ananda: “*Due to Becoming (Bhava) there is no existence of any kind, any precepts, any place, any ground or the Desire Becoming, Form Becoming and Formless Becoming. If there were no Bhava, for all, due to the cessation of Becoming, can Birth exist?*”

Ananda Venerable One, no.

Such, Ananda, is the cause, such is the condition, such is the origin, such is the cause and effect of Birth (Jati), is Becoming (Bhava)”.³³

12. Aging and Death

In Pāli and Sanskrit are all called ‘Jāra’. That is, to make old, change to make old, work to become old... Thus, aging is caused by the changing process of the body. In the Abhidharma literature, the definition of aging (Jāra) is as follows:

“Old age is hair loss, gray beard, wrinkled face, thin body, short breath, the sense organs are about to decay...”.³⁴

Illness is an obstacle because the way the five aggregates body works is not continuous, it will give rise to illness, and it will give rise to unpleasant sensations. Death, Pali and Sanskrit are all Marana, which means to die, to go out, to be forgotten, to pass away, to cease. What is death? Death is when the breath stops, the blood stops flowing, the heart stops beating, life passes. In the Abhidharma literature, “*Death is a life span, warmth and karma are absent, body does not arise, the aggregates are damaged ... so it is called Death*”.³⁵

In short, Birth is a condition for aging, death and aging, death it goes side by side. Therefore, in the Twelve Factors of Dependent Origination, aging and death are combined into one. And the Buddha took aging and death as the object of observing; finally he discovered the whole principle of the Twelve Dependent Originations.

4. The Four Noble Truths³⁶

“Light arose in me in things not heard before”. (Dharmacakrapravartana Sūtra)

The Four Noble Truths, dukkha, its cause, its cessation and the Path leading to its cessation, are the basic doctrines of the Lord Buddha. The following is a brief presentation of these truths basing on the Sutta of The Turning of The Dhamma Wheel.

4.1. The First Noble Truth

Suffering is of three kinds:

1. Physical sufferings birth, old, illness and death
2. Mental suffering: Association with those we dislike, separation from those we like, not to get what one wants
3. The essential form of suffering. The five aggregates: i.e. Rupa, vedana, sanjna, sankhara and vijnana.

This is in fact cosmic suffering.

4.2. The Second Noble Truth

The second Noble truth is the causes of Dukkha: craving or selfish desire (tanha). The craving is threefold:

³² Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 12, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 512.

³³ Mahānidāna Sutta, Dīgha Nikaya, (Collection of long Discourses) Vols III, Van Hanh University, 1972.

³⁴ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 11, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 513.

³⁵ Abhidharma dharma-skandha-pada, vols 11, Great Chief of New Cultivation of the Great Tripitaka XXVI, p. 513.

³⁶ Narada, The Buddha and His Teachings, chapter 17, 1988, Buddhist Missionary Society, p. 319 - 332.

Craving for sensual pleasure (kama-tanha), **Craving for existence** (bhava-tanha): desire for being born again and again. **Craving for non-existence** (vibhava-tanha):

In short, it is craving which compels a man to the cycle of birth and death. Craving or Tanha supplies oil. As a result, the lamp of life keeps on burning.

4.3. The Third Noble Truth

The third Noble Truth is the cessation of dukkha that is Nibbana, the highest happiness and peace. This is the inward state of Arahant.

4.4. The fourth noble truth

The Fourth Noble Truth is the way to the cessation of Dukkha. It is called The Noble Eightfold Path which is also called the Middle path because avoids the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification.

We must put our faith in the Dharma, which is the ultimate truth that the Buddha discovered enlightenment, and the teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path. (*S. āryāṣṭāṅgika-mārga*, *P. Ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*, *C. 八正道*) or methods of cessation of suffering that can lead us out of ignorance, to attain peaceful liberation:

“Bhikkhus, no matter what kind of conditioned dharmas, the Noble Eightfold Path is regarded as supreme, those who put their faith in the Noble Eightfold Path, they put their faith in the supreme. For those who put their faith in the ultimate, they obtain Great Vipāka.”³⁷

It made up of 8 factors which is grouped into three categories as follows.

1. Ethical conduct (sīla): right speech, right action, right livelihood
2. Mental discipline (samādhi): right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.
3. Wisdom (panna): Right view, right thought.

In short, The Buddha says: *“Oh, Bhikkhus, on former times as well as nowadays, I have expounded only Dukkha and the cessation of the Dukkha”*. Because it is useful, fundamentally connected with the spiritual holy life and the bliss here and now. The Four Noble Truths focus attention on suffering as the fundamental problem and seeks liberation for human beings.

5. The benefit and Conclusion

5.1 The benefits of practicing Dharma in life

Whatever we practice, there is merit and benefit. But the merit and benefits of faith are not small. Because faith is the mother of merit, the basis for the arising of all kusala. Therefore, if you do not have faith, you must establish it, when you have gained faith, then strengthen and cultivate it to make it more solid. Therefore, the person who has a firm belief and practices that belief in the right way will have the following benefits.

At one time the Blessed One was in Vesali, calling to the bhikkhus:

“Monks, there are these five benefits for a good man of faith. What is five benefits?”

1. The Gods, the True People, first of all have compassion for those who have faith, not for those who do not have faith.
2. When visiting, they first visit those who have faith, not so for those who do not believe.
3. When accepting real life, they accept first of all those who have faith, not so for those who do not have faith.
4. They preach the Dharma first to those who have faith, not to those who do not.
5. People who have faith, after the death of the body, will be reborn in the good realms, in the heavens.

These teachings, bhikkhus, are the five benefits for the good man of faith.

For example, bhikkhus, on a good plot of land, at a crossroads, there is a large eagle tree that is a refuge for birds. In the same way, bhikkhus, good men with faith are a refuge for Buddhists, for bhikkhus, for bhikkhunis, for lay men and lay women.”³⁸

³⁷ Anguttara Nikaya, volume I, translated by Thich Minh Chau (1996), chapter IV, Four Dharmas, Verses of Wheel, Vietnam Institute of Buddhist Studies, Ho Chi Minh City, p 372.

³⁸ Great Canon of Vietnam, Anguttara Nikaya, (Collection of Gradual Sayings) Vols II, chapter 5, Sumana section, The benefits of faith, Institute of Buddhist Studies Vietnam published, 1996, p.369.

Faith, according to Buddhism, must be righteous faith, pure faith; faith after it has been verified by wisdom. Beliefs that are superficial, vague, and permissive and ignorant of them are superstitions. Therefore, having believed must understand and understand in order to strengthen and increase faith is indispensable for righteous Buddhist faith.

First of all, Buddhists must establish faith in the Three Jewels. Because, only the light of the Triple Gem is capable of dispelling the darkness of ignorance, extinguishing craving, and ending suffering. The pinnacle of faith is faith mind, absolute trust in the pure mind, the eternal enlightenment nature in oneself. Since then, the effort to practice reveals the clear mind, penetrating the truth.

When people has faith, then they gains five benefits, that is: being loved by the monks, visiting, going to the house to receive food, preaching the Dharma, and being reborn in heaven when the body breaks up. In particular, it is faith itself that is *“a refuge for the masses, for bhikkhus and bhikkhunis, for male laypeople and for female laypeople”*.

The above are the five benefits of someone who has generated firm faith in the Three Jewels, and here are three important benefits of someone who deeply believes in cause and effect and has generated discerning wisdom:

5.2 Wisdom

Realize the cause and effect, the cause and condition are the effects of wisdom. It is due to the comprehensive comment, the clear analysis that makes wisdom more and more developed. If an object is in front of our eyes, we just keep it natural it has, made by nature, and then there is nothing left to comment, to analyze. If it goes on like this, the wisdom will become dull, unable to be agile. That's an excuse that makes people lazy to think, for a long time becomes a slow mind. A Buddhist must live by wisdom, so it is clear that all things that birth, growth, destruction and death are in the system of “cause and effect” and “cause and condition”. Things that exist but are not by “cause and effect” and “cause and condition” are irrational and unscientific. Therefore, a person of “right faith” is a person who is practical, scientific, understanding with wisdom.

5.3 Take responsible

Deeply understanding the principles of cause and effect, cause and conditions, that person will take on the responsibility, so it's good or bad, it's their entire fault. I am actively creating good causes, creating good conditions. Everything not good is because I refuse to create it; this is my fault, not anyone else's. Knowing that, we not evade, do not complain, on the contrary, courageously accept it. By realizing the causal causality, we considerate an event that happens good or bad, comes from which cause, meets the causality to happen like that. Then whether there is a bad job or a good job, we all see clearly that there is no mistake. We attempt try create conditions to transform it. Being responsible to transform, not responsible to pass, that is the spirit of the faith righteous.

5.4 Confident

I know for myself whether it's good or bad, indeed I am the owner of all success and failure. Suffering or joy, you are the creator. Tomorrow is bright, tomorrow dark, I am the proactive one. By understanding the causal causality, people will have strong self-confidence. Thanks to the power of confidence, humans try to transform, rise up in all areas. If a nation has virtue and self-confident, that nation will never be submissive, slow to progress. Having self - confidence is having an extraordinary strength. Having self - confidence, cultivation doesn't turn back.³⁹ Believing in the Three Jewels is one of the important issues that every Buddhist must accomplish to serve as a basis for his or her study, others, and society.

Therefore, faith is the mother of all merit, the foundation upon which all kusala dharmas arise. So, if you do not have faith, you must establish it, when you have generated faith, then strengthen and cultivate it to make it more solid.

6. Conclusion

The beliefs of Buddhist teachings are to reading scriptures and listening to monks to raise awareness in the layman and to know the right way of practice. This allows the Buddha's teachings to guide and encourage family, relatives and friends in daily life. The last teachings before the Buddha's parinirvana: *“O those who love the Tathagata, be diligent, rely on the Dharma, and practice the Dharma, take the Dharma as your teacher....”*⁴⁰ Above is the earnest and sincere advice of the Buddha. So, we are the disciples of the Buddha, so let's believe in practicing the above teachings for better results in our own lives as well as our families and society.

The faith in the Three Jewels helps Buddhists strive towards the best that the Buddha taught to achieve peace and happiness. Belief in oneself helps Buddhists to be firm in the face of adversity, not feel guilty or inferior because of their limitations..., thereby actively cultivating the mind to cultivate nature according to the Buddha's teachings, making daily life easier a nicer one.

³⁹ Most Venerable Thich Thanh Tu, First Steps to Study Buddhism, Buddhist calendar 2541-1998. Vietnamese Buddhist Meditation Association. Thuong Chieu Printed Publication Pl 2543-1999, pp.46.

⁴⁰ Mahāparinibbana Sutta - D16, Dīgha Nikāya, (Collection of long Discourses) Department of Religious Affairs, Vietnam, 1991.

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