

A close-up, vertical photograph of a Buddha statue's face. The statue is dark green with patches of gold leaf. The eyes are closed, and the expression is serene. The background is plain white.

Jai dee - jai sabai

*Dhamma
for the
Living
and the
Dead*

Luang Por Gaṇhā Sukhakāmo

Dhamma
for the Living
and the Dead

Ten Dhamma-talks
given in memory of
deceased disciples
of Luang Por Gaṇhā Sukhakāmo

Luang Por Gaṇhā Sukhakāmo

Practical information and copyright:

For inquiries or bookings please contact:

Wat Pah Subthaweedhammārām

T. Wang Mee

A. Wang Nam Khiao

Nakhon Ratchasima

30370, Thailand

http://www.watpahsubthawee.org/

Email: watpahsubthawee@gmail.com,

Phone: +66 (0)85-032-5501 (Gift)

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*Namo tassa
bhagavato
arahato
sammāsambuddhassa*

*Homage to the
Blessed,
Noble and
Perfectly
Enlightened One.*

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Introduction

This booklet is a compilation of Dhamma-talks Luang Por Gaṇhā gave over the course of several years on the occasion of memorial-services for deceased disciples of his. Evenings with memorial-services for a recently deceased person are usually an intense time at Wat Pah Subthawee. Luang Por Gaṇhā is coming to the Sālā and often an impressive number of high-ranking Bhikkhus is arriving from all over Thailand. The basic procedure is always the same: After chanting short pieces representing the seven volumes of the Abhidhamma-Piṭaka (the basket of scriptures containing the higher philosophy) everyone in the audience symbolically offers a pack of funeral-cloth (Paṃsukula-robe), that is provided by the temple, to make merit for the deceased. The Bhikkhus contemplate the impermanence and mortality of all conditioned things and after collecting and storing the robes for the next day there is a Dhamma-talk.

Memorial-services often attract relatives and friends of the deceased who normally don't go to temples, so Luang Por always makes a special effort to make the most of this one chance to teach them Dhamma. The talks have a special flavour and are always tailor-made to suit the particular occasion.

Wherever available, I have added a bit of background information to explain the context in which these talks were given. In the case of elderly, highly-respected disciples of Luang Por the tone of the Dhamma-talks can become very formal and there are long, repetitive passages at the beginning and the end of the talks that may appear tedious and superfluous to a Western reader. They add the touch of

Thai culture and may be helpful in understanding why Luang Por is choosing certain themes for his talk at that particular time. As some of the talks are quite deep, it may be helpful for newcomers to read the more introductory "Delivery 42"-book first. It contains a comprehensive glossary and is available (hopefully) in print or for download from <https://tinyurl.com/y7p5oyx3>.

Thank you to all the relatives and supporters who printed the talks in Thai for free distribution on the day of the respective cremation. Thank you to Gift and Pom for patiently helping with tricky passages and explaining about Thai names and family relations. I continue to be grateful to everyone who is providing free Thai/English language resources. Special thanks to the proofreaders of the Lotus Volunteers, UK.

Any remaining errors or shortcomings are entirely my responsibility.

Sāmaṇerī Viveka
Wat Pah Subthawee Dhammārām
July 2020/2563



Nippon Upakāro Bhikkhu (Luang Por Laai)

(1st October 2018)

(Background info: Luang Por (honorific: Venerable Father) Laai was a senior monk at Wat Pah Subthawee. He was 62 years old and had 26 Vassas (rains retreats) as a Bhikkhu. He had had cancer for a long time and spent the Vassa at a different place. One evening in mid-September LP Laai phoned Luang Por Gaṇhā, because he was still afraid of dying. Luang Por Gaṇhā instructed him on how to separate body, feeling and mind, so that the mind would remain peaceful, even though the body was dying. This teaching became the theme for many weeks during and after the funeral chanting.)

Tonight the Saṅgha, the Krooba Ājāhn (i.e. LP Gaṇhā) and relatives are making merit for Luang Por Laai who has said goodbye to and laid down the Sankhārā (bodily formation) and finished this birth. Luang Por Laai was a very good monk, who practised well and correctly in accordance with the Dhamma-Vinaya¹ and the code of practice

¹ Dhamma = the teaching of the Lord Buddha, Vinaya = the monastic rules; together they form a unit.

(Korwat). He was loved and revered by the Bhikkhus (fully ordained monks) and Sāmaṇeras (novices) as well as the lay-people and everyone else. He was trusted by the Krooba Ājāhn. He was vigorous and strong and was an example and role-model for the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras.

Those who ordain to become Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras have to adhere strictly to practising the Holy Life, to concentrate exclusively on Magga (path), Phala (fruit) and Nibbāna. They have to abstain from the five cords of sensual pleasure (Kāmaguṇa) and strictly have to remove any trace of them from the heart, even perceptions of heaven. The Lord Buddha didn't allow this either in those who followed the Holy Life. He didn't want them to enjoy forms, sounds, odours, flavours, gain, fame and praise; he wanted them to focus on Nibbāna only.

Those who are not ordained, the Lord Buddha wanted to be diligent, renounce, take responsibility and not do anything unwholesome, only wholesome things and accumulate merit by giving Dāna (offerings), keeping the five precepts, and practising meditation. All people need to keep the five precepts. If one doesn't keep the five precepts, one's heart is not human. One is only a human being on the physical level, but the heart is not human. The five precepts are everyone's treasure of being a human being.

In keeping the five precepts, the Lord Buddha wants everyone to focus on their intention and attention and maintain an intention in the heart like this: "I will keep the five precepts completely pure, I won't let them get blemished, defiled and flawed. If I am uncertain and doubtful if something is right or wrong, I definitely won't do it." In case of uncertainty or doubt the Lord Buddha

didn't want us to go ahead anyway. If you insist on doing it, it will surely break the precepts, because there is still lingering doubt.

The five precepts are very good, especially good. They can close the door to hell and after leaving one's body behind, one won't be born as a Peta, ghost, Yakkha, Māra, Asura (beings from lower realms) or animal. The five precepts are like a motor-boat that is very good, excellent. It is an engine with five powers and special abilities. It can be used as a vehicle for crossing the great oceans in safety.

The waters of the great oceans are wide and vast. It is impossible to see the far shore. Nobody can swim across unless they use a good boat; then they can cross it. The Lord Buddha used the water of the great oceans as a simile for us to understand something, namely: the five cords of sensual pleasure, which are forms, sounds, odours, flavours, gain, fame and praise that people are being deluded by, but the Lord Buddha didn't find any substance in. He wanted us to understand that the word kāmagaṇa means Rūpa (form/body), Vedanā (feeling), Saññā (memory and association), Saṅkhāra (thoughts/formations) and Viññāṇa (consciousness) that are being combined to form our body. The Lord Buddha taught that Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Sankhāra and Viññāṇa are not us, they are not our self. The body is one part, the mind is another part; Vedanā is one part, the mind is another. Saṅkhārā – proliferation - is one part, the mind is another; Viññāṇa, that acknowledges things, is one thing, our mind is another. They are different from each other, they are not one. The body that we use to work is here, it is beneficial for us. When we use, Rūpa, Vedanā, Saññā, Saṅkhārā and Viññāṇa, we have to use them with Sati (mindfulness) and Paññā (wisdom).

We apply them only to proceed in our quest for Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. If we don't understand the matter of body and mind, we won't be able to separate the mind from the body.

The Lord Buddha wants us to lead our lives by following the Noble Path. People have to follow the Dhamma, the Teaching of the Noble Sammāsambuddha, the Awakened One.

The five precepts are the foundation and basis for the arising of Sammāsamādhi and Sammāsamādhi is the foundation for the arising of Paññā. Sila (ethics, precepts), Samādhi (meditation, concentration) and Paññā are the basis for the arising of Dhamma. All of us are very selfish, everybody's life is based on selfishness; it is our livelihood. It is based on exploitation, on causing suffering for our fellow human beings and animals. Where is this exploitation coming from? It comes from being deluded with regard to sensual pleasures, from pursuing and obtaining them through seizing and exploiting. Our ancestors are rooted in delusion, delighting² and carelessness³, and are passing this on to us. It is inherited by many generations.

The Lord Buddha developed the Buddha-Pāramī (perfections) for four Uncountables and 100.000 Great Kalpas (aeons) to awaken to become an Arahant, a fully Enlightened One, the teacher of Devas (heavenly beings) and humans. It took a long, long time, many million

² Thai: phloet-phloen. It has the quality of delighting, relishing, enjoying, amusing, getting absorbed and carried away. In the Thai translation of the Pāli Canon (khwaam) ploetploen is used in the Bhaddekkarattasuttas (MN 131 – 134) for one's unskillful way of relating to past and future.

³ Pāli: Pamāda; carelessness, negligence, also often translated as heedlessness.

lifetimes. He came to teach and instruct us on leading our lives according to the Noble Path. We don't have to create any evil, bad Kamma (results of intentional action), make enemies or dig traps for ourselves. He wants us to use the precious birth in this human body for accumulating goodness, Pāramī and virtue.

We have to use our mind to bring our Indriyā (spiritual faculties) to maturity. How are we going to develop our Indriyā? To develop the Indriyā one has to renounce, give Dāna, keep the precepts and cultivate Samādhi and Paññā in daily life, so that Dhamma can arise in the heart. We practise Dhamma while we are working and earning our living by using the body and the four requisites to our advantage and benefit. The Lord Buddha taught that the physical sense pleasures are an advantage and that the four requisites are beneficial. If we are deluded and dwell in delighting and carelessness, these things will be harmful to our mind.

The Lord Buddha taught that there is only one Noble Path, namely the Noble Eightfold Path. This Path is divided into eight aspects. For the understanding of those who practise, what are these eight? These aspects are namely:

1. Sammādiṭṭhi, Right View. Our view is not correct yet. We still hold the view that the body is ours and regard the body and the mind to be one and the same thing. But in fact the body is one thing and the mind is another; they are different from each other.

2. Sammāsankappo, Right Intention. Our intention is not correct yet. We are still deluded by sensual pleasures, by forms, sounds, odours, flavours, gain, fame and praise. We are deluded by the Kāmaguṇa. If we don't get things according to our needs and desires, aversion and ill-will

arise. We are dwelling in carelessness and delighting and continue to create evil, bad Kamma, make enemies and endanger ourselves, both directly and indirectly.

3. Sammāvācā, Right Speech. Our speech is not correct yet. We still tell lies, scold, use divisive speech, our mouth ignites (verbal) bombs, shoots like an automatic-rifle or a machine-gun, we are sarcastic, flatter people, gossip about and criticize other people.

4. Sammākammanto, Right Action. Our actions must not break the precepts, go against the Dhamma or break the law. They have to be rooted in what is wholesome and meritorious and not exploit other people or animals.

5. Sammā-ājīvo, Right Livelihood. Our livelihood must not be based on the suffering of other people or animals, for instance through exploiting people or animals.

6. Sammāvāyāmo, Right Effort. We have to make an effort not to let unwholesome things arise in our mind and make a continuous effort to remove unwholesome things that have already arisen, so that these come to an end.

7. Sammāsati, Right Recollection. We need Sati, Paññā, knowing, being awake and being holy at all times in all postures. We have to practise like this all the time, because practising Dhamma has to be a matter of knowing, being awake and being holy all the time.

We have to know body and mind; know feeling and mind, Sankhārā (proliferation) and mind, know Viññāna, that acknowledges, and the mind. Our Sati and Paññā have to know fully, so that we are not deluded and confuse the body with the mind and mistake the mind for the body, because the five Khandhas and the mind are different from each

other. They are fulfilling their function and our mind also has to do its duty. Then we will be able to develop our heart and mind to take the next step.

8. Sammāsamādhi, Right Concentration/Collection. Most people don't have any Samādhi at all, they only have the five hindrances that are in everyone's heart. Our Sammāsamādhi has to be very strong, has to be outstanding, to keep us free from the hindrances, that are with us all the time in all postures. We need Sammāsamādhi at all times.

In a simile the Lord Buddha compares Sammāsamādhi to a big, clear, deep, wide river. We see the water flowing slowly. It is flowing slowly, but it is deep, wide and big. Sammāsamādhi is a kind of Samādhi that contains Paññā. And Paññā contains Samādhi. We need this type of Samādhi at all times.

The Lord Buddha compared the Samādhi from sitting in the morning, during the day and in the evening with a river and the great oceans. When they are so wide, big and vast that it is impossible to see the far shore, then they are called a great ocean. The depth of the great oceans is immense, nobody can penetrate and understand it. In the end everything is flowing down into the great oceans and they are able to receive everything, regardless of whether it is clean or repulsive. Just like Sammāsamādhi, the great oceans receive everything and are not perturbed by whatever comes flowing in.

Everyone has to undertake getting Sammāsamādhi, because Samādhi means a heart that is free from the hindrances. Also, it is necessary to do sitting-meditation in the evening before going to bed in order to rest the mind and the brain, to repair the body and the brain. This will train our mind to become peaceful, cool and powerful.

For all of us the body is one part, the mind is another. They are different from each other. You have to develop Sammāsamādhi a lot and practise it continuously. Then your practise will be fruitful.

May the special merit, that the Saṅgha and the lay-people made, be given and transferred to Luang Por Laai and I'd like to invite Luang Por Laai to rejoice in partaking of the great merit shared with him. If he has any dukkha (suffering, anything unsatisfactory), may he be relieved from all suffering. If he is happy already, may he experience the highest and eternal bliss and enter Magga, Phala and Nibbāna on this occasion.

A curious incident happened on one of the nights we did the memorial services for Luang Por Laai. A visiting senior monk asked the leader of the chanting to do the long Victory Blessing chant (Jaymaṅgalaṃgāthā) and about five words into the chant a torrential rain started. It was so heavy that the Abhidhamma-chanting (higher philosophy) was delayed by one hour, because Luang Por Gaṇhā couldn't make his way across the 200 metres from his Kuṭi (dwelling) to the Sālā (main hall). The next morning the water-level in the ponds was still about 20cm higher than before.



Recollection of the Dhamma for Yohm⁴ Hut

(18th November 2018)

(Background info: Yohm Hut belonged to the family-clan of Luang Por Gaṇhā's closest lay-disciples. His body arrived a few hours after the end of the Kathina (robe offering) ceremony at Wat Subthawee. Since Luang Por was still coming and going to attend the remaining Kathinas in the branch monasteries with most of the monks, the remaining community performed Abhidhamma-chanting for 12 nights and the cremation happened on the 13th day. It was an intense time.)

May you sit comfortably, being at ease while breathing in and being at ease while breathing out. Tonight is the eighth night of making merit for Yohm Hut who has laid down the Saṅkhārā and passed away.

4 In Thai there are many personal pronouns and ways of addressing each other which depend on people's status, age and relationship. Lay-people commonly address each other as "Khun", which is like Mr./Mrs. and address Bhikkhus as "Tan", "Ājāhn", "Tan Ājāhn", "Luang Por" or "Luang Pu", depending on their seniority and age. Monks generally refer to lay-people as "Yohm", but "Khun" and even "Tan" are also possible, when they are elders and/or highly respected.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to appreciate a pure heart⁵ and to withdraw the mind from the emotions, from feeling, from conventions and from time, so that the heart becomes pure and is truly free from "I" and "Self" and there are only natural phenomena that arise, remain and cease. There is nobody ageing, nobody getting sick, nobody dying, there are only natural phenomena arising, staying and ceasing. Our heart will gain Sati, Paññā and right view and understanding and our practice will be right practice. Our heart will renounce, let go and become empty. Everyone is clinging, we are bearers of a heavy burden. The Lord Buddha wanted us to know that we neither gain or lose anything, because everything arises, stays and ceases. In this way phenomena are not ours, but we don't have Sammādiṭṭhi (right view), we don't have wisdom. We become occupied with running after Avijjā (ignorance) and delusion, therefore the Lord Buddha wanted us to root ourself in Sīla.

Humans are precious beings; we have to make Sīla our foundation, the basis of our lifestyle, the way for Sammādiṭṭhi and Sammāpaññā to arise in our mind.

Our daily life will be really bad if we don't have Sīla as a foundation to support Sammāsamādhi. The five hindrances will dominate our heart and make it pitch-dark.

If our heart is dark, it can't take any steps forward. Because Sammāsamādhi is Samādhi that is equipped with Paññā, we need to have it in every moment. It is a kind of Samādhi with right view and understanding. If we have Sammāsamādhi, we won't be afraid of anything, no matter

5 In Thai there is often no clear distinction between the heart and the mind. Feel free to change the translation in a way that feels right for you.

what arises, no matter what remains. Because we have Samādhi and Paññā, our heart is operating based on Sila, Samādhi and Paññā all the time, independent of our respective posture.

Our heart will reach Sammāsamādhi and Sammāpaññā (right wisdom) and this is called reaching the level of Vipassana (insight). Our heart will be on a level that is equipped with Paññā; our heart will be peaceful and calm through wisdom. We will get to develop our spiritual faculties (Indriyā) continuously by using the elements (Dhātu), the Khandhas and the Āyatana (sense faculties). As we are developing our Indriyā, mental images (Nimittā) won't be able to dominate our heart, because we have Sati-Sampajañña (mindfulness and clear comprehension) and Sammāpaññā.

We won't follow our thinking and emotions as we did before and we will be able to stop any mental problems and neuroses.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to practise like this: We will use the body like a car that is available to us and use the four elements (Dhātu) and the five Khandhas to practise the Dhamma. If we get absorbed by delighting and dwelling in carelessness and become deluded by materialism our heart will get damaged.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to know and understand phenomena. If we are able to withdraw the mind from the body completely, this is a good thing, because it is difficult to separate bodily and mental feeling, because we have been used to mixing them for a long time.

We have to develop the Indriyā as if we are growing fruit; we have to let them get dark and ripe before we can consume them. Sammāsamādhi and Sammāpaññā will be ready to support the arising of Dhamma in us.

We can't get deluded by the rubbish in our life, get deluded by life and intoxicated by the world, just like a boxer who shouldn't get knocked out. We have to know and understand deeply and see things as they really are. Otherwise our heart will just go around in circles.

We have to withdraw the mind from the body by all means and abandon conventions completely, because nothing is the way we think it is and nothing is the way we want it to be, because these things are phenomena. If we don't have Sammāsamādhī and Sammāpaññā, we will be hard pressed. If we allow our heart to get deluded by sense pleasures, we will surely get into a tight corner. Just like our monks who are deluded by having a mobile-phone, internet and being on Facebook.

Our heart will get really dark, because it strays from the path of the Lord Buddha. The Lord Buddha went to the East, we are going to the West in the opposite direction. Having a mobile-phone is a matter of destroying oneself, of destroying the Sāsana⁶ in one's heart.

When we practise the Dhamma and put forth effort, for instance by doing sitting-meditation, we don't need anything. We only breathe in and out being at ease. Our heart will become clean and pure. We get to enter the real, pure heart in order to be able to withdraw the mind from the body and the emotions.

The traditional monks trained their heart a lot. They wanted their heart to be solid, true and pure, free from "I" and "Self" and without the conventions of me and you, woman and man, young and old, of race and family.

⁶ The Buddha's dispensation; "Buddhism".

Everyone has to solve their own problems. We eat food and use many resources. They are wasted if we don't practise the Dhamma, it is a waste of time.

May everyone look at this: Now this person has died and this person is ageing. We are the same. Even though we don't think about them, these things are within us already. They are phenomena that arise, stay and gradually disintegrate in the end. None of our parents and ancestors can take anything along when they depart.

We have to cultivate Sammāpaññā, so that we get right view and understanding. Our heart is not Dhamma yet, it is not neutral and unbiased yet.

Phenomena are phenomena. They age, get sick and die by themselves. They don't have mercy on anyone. Good or bad people, they age, get sick, die and get separated in this way.

May everyone reflect with Sati and Paññā: What are we going to get in this world, when there is nothing to get? We have to remove the sensual pleasures that we cling to and hold dear, we have to remove the ill-will that we cling to from our heart and remove Sakkāyadiṭṭhi, the "I", the "Self", the "me", the "you".

The monks who practised in accordance with the Lord Buddha became Noble Ones and Arahants and reached Nibbāna. We have to copy them, we have to practise like them.

The Lord Buddha didn't want monastics to worry about material goods or any other issue. The word "Gharāvāsa" - householder – means clinging, it describes a person who is deluded by sensual pleasures, by external matters, namely a house, a home. The way back to oneself is this body, the four elements, earth, water, wind, fire. This is the home of our heart, of the elements, of the Khandhas.

We need to know that body and mind are different from each other. Even though we are occupying the body, we can't cling to it. If we want the body to be as we like it, we surely will get mental dukkha, because the body is (made up of) the elements, the Khandhas and the mind is the mind. Don't demand it to be like this or like that. If you do, the mind will surely have dukkha.

We need Sammāpaññā, so that the heart can enter its natural state and reach liberation by occupying the Dhātu and the Khandhas at the same time as developing the Indriyā.

It is easy to talk like this, but we need to apply it in practice. If we keep withdrawing the mind from sensual pleasures a lot, our heart will become clean and won't be coarse; it will be easy for us to see things. If our heart is full of sensual pleasures, it is like muddy water. We can't use it as a mirror to see the reflection of our face.

Luang Ta Mahā Boowa talked about the issue of mobile-phones, the internet, facebook and these things all the time. The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha requires us not to socialise with the community and not to indulge in sense pleasures. The Lord Buddha wanted the monastics to put a lot of special attention on contemplating the body, until they are free from the Āsava (taints, effluents). Take it apart, turn it into pieces, so that nothing is left in order to reduce your attachment to the body. Do it regularly, practise it continuously; don't stop every time you get a little bit peaceful. You have to do it regularly and continuously without interruption, like a chicken that is hatching eggs. It keeps sitting to keep the eggs warm until the chicks hatch out of the eggs by themselves.

The Lord Buddha didn't want us to get addicted to Samādhi and peace. Let's look at the Lord Buddha: when he left the Khandhas and entered Parinibbāna he entered the first, the second, the third and the fourth Jhāna and kept going back and forth between them and finally entered Parinibbāna between the third and the fourth Jhāna. He demonstrated to the Bhikkhus that the Lord Buddha is not attached to Samādhi.

We need to develop our Indriyā continuously. We don't have to imitate the rishis and hermits who are hiding all the time. Their eyes don't get to see forms, their ears don't hear sounds, their noses don't smell odours and when they come into contact with something they really lose it and don't have a leg to stand on.

The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is truly great; greater than this. We can enter Nibbāna in our daily life while we are still alive. The Lord Buddha taught that when we are free from Kilesas (defilements) and the Āsavas (taints, effluents), we have to help other people and other beings, because we have no more mental work to do. Our only duty is to help other people, there is no clinging to happiness and comfort, just happiness itself.

Being comfortable, at ease, means renouncing. If we renounce and understand deeply, we will be happy. Then - when we die - we will have time to lie down and rest.

The Krooba Ājāhn rejoices with everyone who made merit for Yohm Hut tonight. On the 22nd will be the last evening of chanting the Abhidhamma. On the 23rd after the meal we will chant the Mātikā, offer funeral-cloth and take the body of Yohm Hut to the crematorium; there is no need to wait until the afternoon. Because the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras love, respect and revere Yohm Hut, they will use this last chance to say farewell to his bodily Saṅkhārā.

By the Great Noble compassion of the Lord Buddha and the Noble Saṅgha, by their Noble purity and their Noble wisdom, may there be success, may the virtue of the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha) be the light that leads the way for Yohm Hut to go to a good destination, namely Nibbāna, on this occasion.



Yohm Eke

(6th July 2019)

Tonight the Saṅgha and the lay-people Apah, Mama Dao Rueang, the ex-monk Awf, Nong Ooi, siblings, relatives and honourable guests are making special merit for Yohm Eke, who has left the Saṅkhārā and passed away. Yohm Eke was a very good person, truly, especially good. He was established in the Triple Gem, which is the virtue of the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha. He showed a lot of gratitude towards his parents and ancestors and all great kings of Thailand. He was a good person with a high IQ and EQ who developed both his wisdom and happiness. He had been ill for many years and everyone had compassion for Yohm Eke. Yohm Eke was in good spirit, endowed with wisdom and happiness, and continued to live for many years.

Many people thought it wouldn't be long until they had to attend his cremation, but most of those, who thought like this, are already dead and gone. For instance Luang Por Laai (see the first talk): Luang Por Laai liked to say all the time that when Yohm Eke dies, he must attend his cremation, because Yohm Eke is such a good person. In the end Luang Por Laai died before him and Yohm Eke attended his cremation.

Yohm Eke was a good person, who was virtuous, and after leaving the Sankhārā he will naturally go to heaven, because he had already fulfilled his human potential and achieved heavenly and enlightened states while he was still alive. We call him "Sugato": a person who is good here, goes to a good destination and leaves the Sankhārā with dignity. He wasn't able to return home before passing away, so he died in hospital. Luang Por Yai (i.e. Luang Por Gaṅhā) said that Yohm Eke is a very good person. His mental health is good, is excellent; appropriate for being born as the son of Apah and Mama Dao Rueang who are both very good, excellent people. They have three children who are good people with high IQs and EQs. Yohm Eke was dear to everyone in the Saṅgha. Even though he wasn't ordained, his heart and mind improved increasingly. In Luang Por Yai's opinion he was more virtuous than most of the monks who are ordained here.

The Lord Buddha wanted everyone to develop their mind, their duties and their renunciation in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path. The four kinds of Samaṇa (monks, recluses), namely: Sotapanna (stream-enterer), Sakadāgāmī (once-returner), Anāgāmī (non-returner) and Arahant (enlightened one) that the Lord Buddha taught, are not understood by our monks and the general public yet.

Everyone is experiencing a sufficient amount of physical and mental happiness in their daily lives. We are only spending our days waiting to age, get sick and die according to our life-span. We can't think like this! Look for example at the Lord Buddha. He developed the Buddha-Pāramī to renounce for the humans, animals and Devas of the world, for the Petas, Yakkhas, Māras and Demons. He renounced like this until he proceeded to enter Parinibbāna.

Luang Por Yai, Luang Por Gaṇhā, went on Tudong⁷ around Thailand many times and walked no less than 60.000 kilometres. For about three or four years he went on Tudong in the South of Thailand and on his way back he stayed at Suan Mokh with Tan Chao Khun Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu. Luang Por Gaṇhā asked Chao Khun Buddhadāsa: "How have you lived your life since you were a child?" Tan Buddhadāsa replied: "Since I was a child up to now I have trained myself to be a renunciant for others. I am renouncing for the Lord Buddha and love other people more than myself. I practise and perform this every day, there is not a moment where I stop developing myself." He also said: "My friends I went to school with haven't developed themselves in any way since they were children. Nowadays they are still the same, they haven't changed at all in a good direction. The result they will get is old age, sickness, death and separation."

Don't start getting deluded and amusing yourself every time you get a little bit happy, establishing yourself in carelessness. When you have money, you will also have more Diṭṭhimāna (conceit, ego). The Lord Buddha taught that there is nothing good about delusion, delighting and carelessness.

We need happiness and wisdom. Don't get deluded and become stupid, blurred and confused and dwell on wealth, gain, fame and praise. The older we get, the more wisdom we have and we won't be deluded. It is because we become examples and role-models, that our children and grandchildren will get to see role-models, who are adults

⁷ It is a practice of wandering around and observing extra ascetic rules such as wearing only the three principal robes or only eating alms-food.

with a good heart and virtue. Our heart is air-conditioned and there is wisdom too. We are truly and extraordinarily happy around the clock, because there is nothing coming down to anything. Nobody gets or loses anything; it comes and then it goes.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to focus on the present, because the present is the future; the future comes from the present. We need wisdom and happiness in the present. When we are happy, we will also have wisdom. The Lord Buddha wanted us to do and practise like this.

Everyone is carrying a heavy burden, that we need to lay down. The Lord Buddha didn't want us to lay down our duties and work. He wanted us to lay down the mental problem of clinging. Regarding our work, he wanted us to be more diligent and renounce more than before. Don't act like those monks, who haven't got a clue about the Dhamma, the Lord Buddha's Teaching, who think that letting go means not to want anything and get into sleeping and resting after their ordination. Letting go is a matter of the heart and mind. Diligence, renouncing and taking responsibility in order to be happy are called "letting go", because we were attached to laziness and now turn towards renunciation. We will have right view, right understanding and true happiness, will get to renounce our laziness and become more diligent and responsible than before.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to be free from things that exist – not from things that don't exist. Because we have wisdom and our heart does not have an "I" and "Self", it is called "free" and "letting go".

May the public and the monks know about letting go. Otherwise the whole of Thailand will be lazy. Both, those who stay at home and those who stay in temples will be

lazy throughout Thailand, because they are misunderstanding it. They let go of their duties and work. This is really bad! How is our country going to develop? How are we going to overcome our selfishness? If we are happy and at ease and have wisdom, we won't have any problems. There won't be anyone with mental problems or neuroses. There will be true happiness and ease.

Our thinking is an important topic. Our mind is a personal matter. When we think good or bad things, nobody will know and see it. We allow ourselves to think things that are not good. This is evil, bad Kamma, retributive and unskillful, because we are developing technology and work at the same time as our mind. If we don't think in a good way, our heart will become defiled. This is an important matter, it is not a trifling matter.

The Lord Buddha didn't want us to become absorbed in sensuality, in ill-will and worry about the past or the future. We have to think well, speak well and do good. We have to act and think well like a clockwork that is running smoothly. When we speak well and do good, everything will be fine. This is what we have to do and practise.

Why are our monks not making any progress in their practice? It is because they are not thinking good thoughts. The Lord Buddha taught that if one is not thinking right, everything will be wrong, and that means, it is not correct. If we don't improve our heart and mind and don't see the importance of thinking, it is wasting everybody's time.

Being a monk or a layperson is regarded as being a precious being. If we keep thinking in a bad way as before, how are we going to get anything good? How can we become virtuous?

This is compulsory for everybody's practice, because the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is practical. We have to take the Dhamma and practise it in our body. When it is present in our speech, we will be happy.

The Dhamma of the Noble Sammāsambuddha has to be something that can be taken in and consumed. We have to reach the Dhamma while we are still alive. This is the Lord Buddha's Dhamma.

We can't follow the teaching-style of the monks of the old generation. They taught: In this birth you were born as lay-people, you have little merit and luck, because you haven't given Dāna, kept the precepts and practised the Dhamma. When you were born as a lay-person, you came to be poor. In this lifetime you have to give Dāna, keep the precepts and practise Dhamma. After your death you will be reborn in heaven and go to Nibbāna. They talked and taught like this. People of the new generation who have Sati and Paññā are thinking: "The monks are teaching to deceive us, to get goods from the lay-people."

In truth, all human beings need to fulfill their human potential, reach heavenly states or enter Nibbāna while they are still alive. If we wait to go to heaven or to enter Nibbāna until after death, it is not certain, because even in the present moment we still keep falling into hell alive. In reality the Lord Buddha taught us to reach happiness and the ending of suffering right now, at this time; because a thorn is stinging us, we have to pull it out at once, we don't wait to remove it until after death. We better die a long time from now; after we have died, it is not yet certain, if we will get to go to heaven, reach Nibbāna, or not. Even in the present moment we are not fulfilling or human

potential or enjoying heavenly states yet; we are falling into hell alive. We have physical dukkha and mental distress, have mental problems and neuroses. In this way we are falling into hell alive.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to have right view and understanding and be happy around the clock while we are working and while we are developing Sati and Paññā. Wisdom and happiness have to go together, have to be one single unit. They are inseparable. The Buddha, Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha have to be in our heart and mind at all times until we are able to use it for solving our problems. The Lord Buddha's Dhamma is the most precious and excellent thing. Even hearing the Buddha's name is precious beyond measure and limit.



*Everyone needs to practise in order to build up
the necessary causes and conditions.
If we don't accumulate them through practice,
we will only be philosophers
and everyone will fail
in this precious human life.*





Mae Saowanee Wasalamlert

(18th April 2017)

Khun Mae⁸ Saowanee was a very good person, especially good. She was established in the Triple Gem, which is the virtue of the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha. She was a person who saw the danger in Saṃsāra (the cycle of birth and death). She was really kind-hearted. She respectfully asked Luang Por for permission to be taken here to Wat Pah Subthawee Dhammārām for the funeral ceremonies after her death. All members of Khun Saowanee's family are established in the Triple Gem. They brought her body here to dedicate merit particularly for her after she had died. They didn't care about their happiness, comfort and ease, about glory and fame. They are using this last opportunity especially to send Khun Mae Saowanee to heaven and Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. The people who give merit and wholesome things for our highest benefit are: the Noble Sammāsambuddha, the Arahants and the Noble Saṅgha – those who practise well and correctly, because their hearts contain noble purity, pure noble compassion and pure noble wisdom.

⁸ The word khun has a meaning like Mr./Mrs. in addressing or referring to people and Mae means “mother”.

The lives of us here, who were born as human beings, can be regarded as very precious, because we have the chance to meet the Dhamma-Teaching of the Lord Buddha. The Lord Buddha is a person who saw the danger in Saṃsāra and the danger in taking rebirth. He cultivated the Buddha-Pāramī to help all beings who are in the cycle of birth and death forever without end. He developed the Buddha-Pāramī for four Uncountables and 100.000 Great Kalpas, before he awakened to the knowledge of a Sammā-sambuddha and became the Teacher of Devas and humans. The Lord Buddha's Dhamma is a truly precious thing. Everyone in this world gains immeasurable merit even from hearing the name of the Lord Buddha. The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha does not become outdated, even after 100, 1000, 10.000, 100.000 or a million years, because it is the Noble Eightfold Path. It improves us in every way in body, speech and mind including our thinking, effort, endurance, truthfulness (Sacca), determination (Adhiṭṭhāna), Metta (loving kindness), Sati, Paññā and Samādhi. If we apply the Noble Eightfold Path, our potential as human beings will turn into excellence.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to think and understand. If we reflect in terms of cause and effect, the scientists will agree and those with Sati and Paññā will agree too, because the Dhamma is truly excellent and good. There are no disadvantages or dangers, only advantages and benefits. It will change everything for the better. If we apply the Noble Eightfold Path there will only be merit.

Most of us don't understand the Lord Buddha's Dhamma. We throw away the Dhamma, the Teaching of the Lord Buddha and only care for our business, duties and work,

being rich, eating well and living comfortably and being somebody with fame and rank. If we do this, we will get the corresponding result. The fruit that we will reap in the end will be old age, sickness, death and separation and dwelling in carelessness because of being unenlightened.

The Lord Buddha taught us to be happy in doing our work, because work is happiness a means of applying our potential for excellence as human beings and putting it to work. It is the cause and condition for reaching happiness and the ending of suffering. It is blameless and free from danger, there is only merit. The more we apply the Dhamma, the more we get better and at ease – both in our business and in our heart. We will increasingly become a person whose heart has got air-conditioning installed. We will be able to reach Magga, Phala and Nibbāna in the present moment for ourselves, because we will act, think and do everything correctly. There won't be any evil or bad Kamma for us, only merit and wholesome things.

If we practise the Dhamma, the word "poor" won't exist for us. We are poor, because we don't practise the Dhamma. We want to be rich, want to have, want to be, but we don't create the causes and conditions for it and then we like to think: "When will I reach Magga, Phala and Nibbāna?" Naturally everyone wants to reach Nibbāna and doesn't want to carry on in the cycle of birth and death, but we don't want to create the causes and conditions for it.

Everyone needs to practise in order to build up the necessary causes and conditions. If we don't accumulate them through practice, we will only be philosophers and everyone will fail in this precious human life.

The Lord Buddha taught that the Dhamma goes against the world, against the current. Everyone needs to go against the current of greed, hatred and delusion that is dwelling in everybody's heart. Don't believe your mind or trust yourself, because our heart is established in Moha-Pāramī; it is taking Moha (delusion) as its standpoint. It is established in Dosa-Pāramī and makes Dosa (hatred) its standpoint and it is established in Lobha-Pāramī, making Lobha (greed) its standpoint.

We have to go against the flow. This is the occasion, the Pāramī, that we have to apply the Dhamma on and practise with. We have old habits and old conduct. We have to change our conduct and oppose our sentiments. If we follow our desires and emotions, it won't be compatible with our conduct. Most people are turning their backs on the Lord Buddha. They take Moha-Pāramī as their standpoint and aim.

These days everything is pleasant and comfortable: the food that we consume, our home, medicines, vehicles, communication, cars and aeroplanes, phones and the internet. If we don't have a lot of Sati and Sampajañña, we won't be able to stop ourselves.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to have a lot of Sati-Sampajañña. If we have a lot of Sati-Sampajañña, greed, hatred and delusion can't arise. When we develop Bud-dho, it is for Sati-Sampajañña. Ānāpānasati (mindfulness of the breath) is also for Sati-Sampajañña. The four Satipaṭṭhāna (foundations of mindfulness) are also for Sati-Sampajañña. Sati-Sampajañña is the cause and condition to get air-conditioning installed in one's heart. The Lord Buddha taught like this.

There is a lot of delusion around our body, we are deluded by our assumptions. The Lord Buddha wanted us to contemplate the body every day. He wanted us to take the skin off, peel it off, every day and recite the 32 body-parts. Then we won't feel like a man or a woman and the assumption, that the body is Self will be reduced. A Nimitta (sign, visual image) in accordance with Dhamma will gradually arise. It is a Nimitta that says: "it is not me, it is not Self; it is not a woman nor a man; it is not us, it is not them." It will gradually arise from developing our contemplation.

The Lord Buddha taught like this; Luang Por Mun Bhuridatto, Luang Por Chah Subhaddho and Luang Ta Maha Boowa Ñaṇasampanno taught like this. They taught to contemplate the body every day, and to contemplate old age, sickness, death and separation every day. Then a Dhamma-Nimitta will arise. If we don't do and practise like this, the Dhamma-Nimitta, which is the Dhamma of liberation, won't be able to arise in us, because there are no causes and conditions for the Dhamma to arise.

Bhikkhus can do it and so can everyone else. Everyone has to walk along the Noble Eightfold Path without exception. The Lord Buddha taught us to see the danger in Saṃsāra. Birth will cause us suffering, because after birth we have to age, get sick, die and get separated. If we have Sati and Sampajañña, we will have Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā and Nibbāna and reach purity and liberation by having Sati-Sampajañña.

May you keep this in mind and hold it up well. Develop yourself so that your mind withdraws from the assumptions. Your mind won't drop down into lower realms, it will have Sati-Sampajañña as its master. It won't

be deluded and gullible around things that people bury themselves in, but that don't have any existence on the level of one who knows.

May you give and transfer the merit, virtue and goodness that we have made here tonight to Khun Mae Saowanee. May she be free from dukkha and if she is already happy, may she experience the highest bliss so that her heart reaches heaven, Magga, Phala and Nibbāna.

May everyone who has made merit here tonight and practised the Dhamma be blessed, and on this occasion take the goodness of the Triple Gem, which is the virtue of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha, to grow in being established in virtue, namely by fulfilling one's human potential, going to heaven and reaching Nibbāna.



Khamik Ṭhitabho Bhikkhu (Phra Bell)

(1st October 2016)

(Background info (as I have heard it): Phra Bell drowned in a water-reservoir just outside the monastery gates during an afternoon work-period. LP Gaṇhā had warned the monks not to enter the water, but Phra Bell insisted on swimming across, even though the other monks tried to persuade him to walk around the reservoir with them for their next task. He didn't even make it half way across before he drowned.)

Mr. Koo and Mrs. Khiao Waan who are the father and the mother of Phra Bell are very good people – especially good. They are established in the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha and only had one son, who was Phra Bell. They wanted Phra Bell to be a good, virtuous person too and keep him free from any kind of danger. Even before his ordination, Luang Por Gaṇhā told them that they need to get him ordained to be safe and turn his heaviness into lightness; otherwise an accident might happen. Ordaining means to cut off one's bad Kamma. If we are well focused in accordance with the Lord Buddha, we may be able to save our life. Phra Bell focused on practising, was a Sāmaṇera for two Vassas and ordained as a Bhikkhu this

year during his third Vassa. Then a deadly accident occurred, that was beyond our control. His parents and the Krooba Ājāhn did all they could to help him, but he could not escape Māra's lasso.

"Granny", Mr. Koo's mother, is a very good person too. When her grandson ordained, she came, took the precepts and practised the Dhamma alongside Phra Bell.

Phra Bell's grandparents are very good people who taught their son Koo, their siblings and relatives how to be good people. Mr. Koo is a good person of Chiang Kham, who was the mayor for a long time, throughout many terms. Finally he relinquished his position to practise the Dhamma. When his son ordained at the temple, he practised at home. Muai also got a special opportunity, because she had to look after her grandmother who wasn't going anywhere, but stayed to practise with Phra Bell.

Phra Bell's life-span was only this long. Even though everybody was helping, it was still beyond our capability. Regarding the matters of bad Karma, retribution and the past that all of us have accumulated for many lifetimes: even the Noble Sammāsambuddha met with karmic results (Vipāka Kamma) until he entered Parinibbāna.

The Lord Buddha wanted everyone to cut off their bad Kamma. How can we cut off our Kamma? Cutting off Kamma means not to follow our wants, our greed, our hatred and our delusion, because we are taking the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha as our role-model and taking up Sīla, which is the Middle Way and Samādhi, which is stability.

Hardly anybody's heart is firm and strong; mostly it is feeble. The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is going against the current, we can't follow our desires, we can't follow our

emotions. May everyone understand: In order to practise, you have to be determined, otherwise you won't be able to cut off bad Kamma and retribution⁹, because everyone has to resolve one's own Kamma and retribution.

We are born to be human for a maximum of 100 years, then everybody has to pass away from this world. The most important thing is to cut off our bad Kamma and retribution in order to stop existence and end this or that birth. Everyone must be able to do and practise like this. We have to become tired and experience difficulties as we are practising.

The precepts are Magga, Phala and Nibbāna; firmness and strength are Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. When our Samādhi is bad, Paññā can't arise. We have to practise in every posture; if it is limited to sitting- or walking-meditation it is not sufficient yet.

May everyone understand this about practising Dhamma: We were born as human beings. Therefore we have to practise the Dhamma, because this Dhamma is purity, in this Dhamma there are no women or men, no children or old people. If our heart is free from greed, hatred and delusion it will shake off all these concepts.

Our heart is neither young or old, it has no race. If we separate mind and body, we will get to the meaning of the existence and non-existence of "I" and "Self".

Our practice also means renunciation. For instance, if we make our work an act of renunciation, we will gain both material goods, gain, fame and praise and virtue.

The Lord Buddha didn't want us to throw away our home and flee it. When we practise well at home, in the family,

⁹ Bad Kamma and retribution: The consequences of one's intentional unwholesome actions in body speech and mind. They can manifest as illnesses, accidents, loss of property or through other beings harming us.

we will gain right view. Most of us still have the misunderstanding that one has to ordain and stay at a temple to practise Dhamma. Those, who are ordained are living and practising Dhamma in a temple, the lay-people are living and practising at home. If we practise Dhamma, our daily life will become increasingly happy. We will get to renounce in body, speech and mind and this happiness is the path to Nibbāna. We will develop our humanity towards goodness and excellence. We can't make delusion our standpoint, we can't establish ourself in "I and "Self".

The precepts are our path of practice, they are our Middle Way. Our life is a failure if we are not able to limit and control ourself. We have to know the path of practice. If we don't get tired and into difficulties, there is no chance for renunciation.

We have to thank everything that is annoying us, that offers a chance for us to renounce. This is our test, our object, that is presented to us to give us the chance to practise in our daily life.

If we don't practise in accordance with the Buddha's teaching, we won't be able to cut off bad Kamma and retribution. All dhammas arise from causes and conditions. We only take happiness and comfort on the material level, but physical happiness is impermanent and doesn't last long. The danger in Saṃsāra is frightening, that we have to carry on being reborn continuously without end.

There is carelessness and delighting in everyone. We keep falling into hell in our daily lives because we are not developing our mind and cutting off the bad Kamma and retribution, which we could cut off, if we didn't follow our desires. Kamma and retribution are oppressing everyone, but we can't see it, because we have a lot of desire and greed.



Chatchai Kusonsinchai

(22nd June 2018)

(Background info: He was the son of a very devoted long-term supporter of this monastery and died in a road accident in his forties. Ten days later a niece of the same supporter also got killed on the road. Thailand has one of the highest number of road deaths in the world.)

Tonight is an occasion for making special merit for the son of Thao Gae Moo, who has left the Sankhārā and passed away. Thao Gae Moo is a very good person, especially good. He has been practising the Dhamma with Luang Por for more than 30 years. He is established in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha. He is established in gratitude and His Majesty the King Bhumipol Adulyadej. Throughout the years of coming here, he has kept the eight precepts on every moon day (Wan Phra) and during the Vassa he is keeping them all the time. He is a very good person, who focuses on the benefit of the nation, the Sāsana (Buddhism) and the King, and is beneficial to society. He gives importance to what is good and right and makes it his standard.

The four kinds of Samaṇa can exist and arise in those, who practise in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path that the Noble Sammāsambuddha taught. They cannot be

found anywhere else. Most of us still don't understand and try to improve results instead of practising correctly by starting at the cause. We get into this really wrong practice, because we don't understand.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to have Sati, but Sati alone is not enough, we also need Paññā. We are following our habits, what we call "instincts" and get things totally wrong every time, because our view and opinions are not correct yet.

If everyone were to follow the Noble Eightfold Path in their life, everything would be alright, because we would apply Sati and Paññā together. Once we have Sati and Paññā, we can apply these two to other tasks as well. For instance, when we talk, we will have Sati and Paññā before we speak. When we pursue our job to make a living, we also need to have Sati and Paññā before pursuing these activities. When we have Sati and Paññā, we take the various factors of the Path and make them work together in our Dhamma-practice. We as human beings have to practise like this, then we will be able to solve our problems and end dukkha.

We pursue this as best as we can from morning until we go to bed and when we get up, we continue. We can't do it in any other way, we have to practise like this, to become experts in it. Our Indriyā and Pāraṃi will ripen, because we don't stop practising and carry on continuously. It is a jigsaw puzzle, it is the law of acting according to scientific principles, according to the principle of cause and effect, that the Lord Buddha taught: "Because this is, good things will be there too."

Unfortunately everyone is wasting time and opportunities by not using and practising the Dhamma. The Lord Buddha wanted everyone to help themselves by practising Dhamma.

Everyone who was born on this earth, regardless of whether they are Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Brahmin, Hindu, Sikh or don't follow any religion at all, have to practise Dhamma in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path to stop, make an end of dukkha and get out of the circle of birth and death. Everyone has to be able to fulfill their human potential, go to heaven and enter Nibbāna before death, while they are still alive. Everyone is able to reach happiness and the ending of suffering by creating the causes and conditions in one's practice.

For instance, we study from kindergarten up to a doctor's degree in order to penetrate the system of the law of Kamma and to reach happiness and the ending of suffering. We do it to avoid disorder and to pursue only good things, in order to be both clever and smart and virtuous as it is appropriate for everyone who was born as a human being.

Human beings have to be smarter and more clever than other beings, because we have the chance to create causes and conditions and the potential to apply renunciation, to bring it into our actions. We can apply endurance and practise it, apply diligence and practise being responsible. We can apply truthfulness (Sacca) and determination (Adhiṭṭhāna) and practise it. We can use high levels of loving kindness (Metta), compassion (Karunā) and pure wisdom and apply it in our practice. We can apply the perfection of equanimity (Upekkha-Pāramī) and put it into practice. Other beings can't do it, they can't practise like this.

We as human beings have to develop our own species, a precious species, that is born as human beings. Just like chili has to develop its hot spiciness and sugar-cane has to develop its sweetness, we have to develop our potential,

apply and practise it. We become our own refuge through practising. We depend on our parents, they raise, support and teach us, then we have to rely on ourself by steering ourself into practising. Instead of being crazy about external things and delighting in them we have to improve ourself.

Delighting makes us become deluded and careless. We have to apply Sati and Paññā. All of us have to dress and embellish ourself through practising Dhamma¹⁰. We have to improve ourself in body, speech, mind and manners, in consuming and resting, we have to remake ourself completely. Don't think of yourself as clever and smart; this is the place, this is the stage that everyone is entering by practising from early morning until going to sleep.

None of us wants to age, to get sick, to die and to get separated, but nobody goes and solves the problem at its origin; we turn towards improving the results instead. We don't want to age, get sick and die, but practising in this way, it is impossible, because the true nature of these things is to change according to causes and conditions. They are not us, not them. We don't want them to age, get sick, die and get separated, but this can never happen – it is impossible.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to reflect and regard the body as not ours. How can external things, such as our relatives, our siblings, our husband or wife be ours, when we do not even own a body? We have to apply our wisdom.

The Lord Buddha had a past, but he didn't cling to past experiences. Most of us are clinging to the past; we miss our parents and grandparents and dukkha arises from it.

¹⁰ The deceased was a well-known photographer, his ex-wife is a film star, maybe this is why Luang Por uses these images in this paragraph.

When we think, then let's think like this in order to gain wisdom: "My Parents and grandparents departed according to their nature; it won't be long until I will have to go too according to my nature."

The Lord Buddha wanted us to use this life to accumulate Pāramī. In order to become an enlightened disciple you don't have to become a Buddha like him, who developed the ten Pāramī in their basic, intermediate and supreme stages. Develop the Pāramī and practise in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path. Don't start at the results, only wanting to be peaceful, rich and lucky without creating the causes and conditions for becoming rich and for achieving Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. You don't want to be reborn, how is that going to be possible? We have to create the causes and conditions and accumulate Pāramī like the Lord Buddha.

At the time of the Lord Buddha there were also days and nights just like nowadays. Chillies were hot, sugar was sweet and people were born, aged, got sick, died and got separated. People were also stuck in greed, hatred, delusion, sorrow, lamentation and distress – everything was just the same. If it were not, we wouldn't get to develop the ten Pāramī, we wouldn't get to practise in accordance with the Noble Eightfold Path. It could be because we don't know how to lead our life according to the Noble Eightfold Path or because our heart is weak and feeble and can't resist greed, hatred and delusion, or a combination of both weakness and ignorance that hinders our development.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to understand that in leading our life, we have to be happy in practising the Dhamma by following the Noble Eightfold Path. Don't seek wealth and worldly happiness only. We need to become happy

through having Sati, Paññā and following the Lord Buddha Don't separate your work and livelihood from Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā, from Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā (spiritual development)and the minor aspects that make up the Noble Eightfold Path.

On this occasion of making merit for Thao Gae Moo's son, the Krooba Ājāhn offers this Dhamma for the siblings, family and offspring so that they get to understand that the principles of the Dhamma-teaching of the Lord Buddha are really and truly excellent. They can examine the Dhamma both by scientific principles and in terms of cause and conditions for human beings to go to heaven, reach Nibbāna and end all suffering that is arising in their body and mind.

By the Noble purity, the Noble compassion and the Noble pure wisdom of the Noble Sammāsambuddha, may the merit that the Krooba Ājāhn, the Saṅgha, the community and the relatives have made today lead Chatchai Kusonsinchai to success; may he receive this merit, go to heaven and reach Magga, Phala and Nibbāna on this occasion.



Luang Por Nawm Namakaro, Yohm Kovid¹¹, Yohm Khawn

(23rd April 2019)

(Background info (as I have heard it): Their car crashed into a container-truck and the accident killed the Ājāhn and two laymen. A junior Bhikkhu and a Sāmaṇera survived with serious injuries. In the past Luang Por Gaṇhā had already advised the Ājāhn not to travel so much.)

Tonight is the second night that the Saṅgha of Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras, the lay-community and the relatives are making special merit by chanting the Abhidhamma, offering funeral-cloth (Paṃsukula), giving a Dhamma-talk and then transferring this merit to Luang Por Nawm, Yohm Kovid and Yohm Khawn who left the Saṅkhārā when they died in an accident. They won't be coming back, they are gone for good. We shall make merit for them like this every night.

On Friday, 26th April we will take Yohm Khawn's body and cremate it around mid-day. Likewise, on Saturday, 27th April we will take Yohm Kovid's body and cremate him around

¹¹ The name Kovid is derived from Pāli "Kovida" and means "one who is in possession of right wisdom".

mid-day. On Sunday, 28th April we will take the body of Luang Por Nawm and cremate him here at Wat Pah Subthawee Dhammārām at 11 AM, so that the Krooba Ājāhns from the North and South of Thailand and those from abroad who live far away won't get back home too late.

Everyone who was born as a human being can be regarded as a truly and particularly precious beings. We have the time and opportunity, the merit and luck to be able to train ourself for Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. The most important thing for us is to have right view and right understanding. In order to reach excellence everyone has to practise in accordance with the Dhamma, the Teaching of the Noble Sammāsambuddha.

Our day has 24 hours. We sleep between 6 and 9 hours and are awake between 15 and 18 hours. The 15 to 18 hours that we are awake are a time when we are the happiest person in the world. We are really and truly happy that we get to practise in accordance with the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha.

The Dhamma of the Lord Buddha is happiness and the ending of suffering in body, speech and mind. The Lord Buddha was truly blissful After his enlightenment, he experienced the happiness of liberation (vimutti-sukha) for 49 days; 7 days in the sitting-posture, 7 days standing, 7 days walking. Then he started teaching, so that we all can reach mental happiness and the ending of suffering.

He taught the Noble Eightfold Path for us to practise. In our daily lives, we have to give importance to the Dhamma, make it our point of reference and lifestyle. This is called the highest path. If we follow our instinct of selfishness, our clinging to an "I" and a "Self", which is selfishness, it will be the cause and condition for us to carry on in the cycle of birth and death and this or that existence without end.

May you understand this about leading your daily life: When it is a life that is full of happiness while working and practising Dhamma, then it is truly happy. It is developing in mind, speech, body and in our duties, that we simply take as just something arising for us.

Our view and understanding is not Sammādiṭṭhi yet. Sammādiṭṭhi namely is right view and right understanding and will make us practise in the right way. If we have wrong view and understanding, whatever we do, will be wrong, because it comes from a foundation and root of Avijjā, from ignorance. It is not the process and current that will lead us to Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. Practising Dhamma means right view, right understanding and practising correctly.

Being happy around the clock: If we are pleased, happy and satisfied, our heart will be at ease and our body will be strong. We will have a long life and whatever we do will be fruitful. We will be happy in body and mind at the same time. In order to accumulate Pāramī for Magga, Phala and Nibbāna, it is not sufficient to practise only in the morning and the evening by doing chanting and sitting-meditation. We are not practising and applying the Noble Eightfold Path yet that the Lord Buddha wanted us to practise; we are not making it work. We need to be happy and at ease all the time in order to turn the Dhamma into an uninterrupted process. It is like droplets of water, that are dripping, they can't match running water. If it becomes a continuous stream, the water can flow into the great oceans. Reflect on this: Suppose you were to breathe only in the mornings and in the evenings and wouldn't breathe during the day. Would you be able to stay alive? You can't live like this.

Practising Dhamma is the same. We need to practise all the time until we go to sleep. When we wake up, we continue practising. The more we get into it and practise, the happier we get. If we stop every time we get just a little bit of happiness, it is not useful yet. The Lord Buddha taught that this is still dwelling in delighting and carelessness. If we become even the tiniest little bit attached to happiness and comfort, this is called dwelling in carelessness. It is equal to working one day and then resting several days. This way we are only living on old merit and consuming old goods. This is called still dwelling in delighting, being established in carelessness.

The Lord Buddha taught that humans are enjoying happiness and comfort, and when their merit runs out, most of them get reborn in hell, because they dwell in carelessness and delighting. Devas are attached to happiness and comfort and when their life-span has expired, most of them are reborn in hell.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to practise. He wanted us to be agents and producers, he wanted us to create wholesome causes and conditions and establish ourselves in heedfulness (non-carelessness). When we practise, we need to have a strong and firm mind. We have to be practitioners, agents and producers. Don't become someone who is deluded, who delights and is attached to consumerism.

If we are happy and wise, our practice will be free from dukkha, there will only be happiness and the ending of suffering. At the moment we are deluded by and attached to physical happiness and materialism. Physical and material happiness are truly and surely impermanent. They

arise, age, get sick, die and get separated even though we nurture, rest and preserve them; everything has to leave us in the end without exception.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to develop both the mental and the technological level at the same time. For example, look at the rich, developed and well-organized countries who are advanced in technology. They have only developed according to scientific principles on the physical and the material level and have got mental problems and neuroses. If we are pleased, at ease and are happy with renouncing and doing our work as well as thinking, speaking and doing good things, this is called "Sugato". Regardless of whether we are staying or going, everything will be well, because our heart has Sammādiṭṭhi, right view and right understanding.

If our heart is good and at ease, we are happy. Bad deeds that we have done repeatedly in many ways in the past, evil, retribution and dangers are not able to follow us and catch up with us, because we are happy, our heart has power and an aura that protects us. Our bad Kamma, any retribution or dangers lurking in the background, won't be able to see us or hear us, because our heart is good and at ease. We attain liberation and the bad Kamma we used to make is not able to drive us into doing any new bad deeds.

For example, let's look at Venerable Angulimāla. He had already killed 999 people and only one more person was missing to complete 1000. He heard the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha and reached happiness and the ending of dukkha and his heart was good, at ease and free from dukkha. He entered the Dhamma and became an Arahant.

Let's look at the example of the thief "Red Beard". His job was to be the king's executioner from a young age until he retired. Venerable Sāriputta taught him the Dhamma so

that he would understand it and then focus on the present being happy and at ease. The bad past Karma he had made from youth to old age could not catch up with him, because he was happy and at ease.

We need to have a happy and easeful heart. If we are not happy and at ease, we will become neurotic, even though we are rich, clever and smart. When we are happy, we will be able to solve our own problems and other people's too. When we ordain as Bhikkhus or Sāmaṇeras, we will be increasingly happy, because we are cutting off all worldly things; we cut off the past, cut off the future. We are happy in the present moment, in renouncing, in taking responsibility, in having Sīla and Dhamma. That's blissful, that is real happiness.

If our Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras are very happy and at ease in the present, they don't want to disrobe, because happiness and the ending of suffering is already there. We want to disrobe because we are not happy. How are we going to become happy, if we don't renounce?

The Lord Buddha is a person who renounces. He developed the Buddha-Pāramī for many million lifetimes in order to renounce, serve humankind and heal other people. He realized happiness and the ending of suffering. Look at His Majesty Bhumiphol Adulyadej, look at the structure of how he led his life. He is someone who renounced and served people in Thailand and abroad.

If our Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras have right view and understanding, they will become really and truly happy. This is regarded as ordaining for happiness and the ending of suffering in heart and mind, for experiencing the happiness of liberation at all times.

If we are still deluded by our instincts and cling to an "I" and a "Self", where are we going to get happiness from? Because our views and opinions can still be compared to those of an animal, a Peta, an Asura we are no different from them. Can you see that we have to elevate our heart to the level of following the Lord Buddha?

The Lord Buddha was happy. He didn't wear shoes, didn't use an umbrella, had only three robes and his bowl didn't have a lid yet. But he was the happiest person in the world; there was no one as happy as him. His happiness was really and truly supreme. If we have right view and understanding and practise correctly, we will be happy. The Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras who ordained at the time of the Lord Buddha under him practised for Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. They didn't want heaven or anything else, they even renounced their only children.

If we renounce with happiness and satisfaction, everything will improve. The Lord Buddha didn't want us to worry about food, sleeping or resting. He wanted everyone to renounce in body, speech and mind and not to want anything. If we want something, we will get stressed.

Let's look for example at Ānanda. The Lord Buddha had entered Parinibbāna. Ānanda wanted to attain Arahantship, but no matter what he tried, he couldn't do it, because there was wanting. Ānanda despaired because nothing worked, and gave up his desire. As he lay down to sleep, he became an Arahant.

Even normal circumstances give us enough of a headache. If we get into wanting, our headache will increase. Practising Dhamma means to observe things as they are. All things arise, stay and cease; we don't get anything. If we practise in this way, Nibbāna will appear in everyone's heart.

We have to be happy with working and practising Dhamma. We have to be extraordinarily happy. It is as if we are eating delicious food. If we continue eating, we will automatically become full. We don't have to ask someone with psychic powers which level we have attained, because we will know for ourselves when we have reached happiness and the ending of suffering, just like a person eating food.

Because the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha has scientific principles, it can be examined by scientists. But the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha goes beyond science, because it is focussing both on the material level and mental happiness at the same time. If it were only on the scientific level, there would still be mental problems. If we progress both on the scientific level and in mental happiness, we take steps beyond science.

The Lord Buddha wants the lay-people to understand this: Dhamma-practice is something we have to do at home, at work and in the family. We have to be happy when we work at home, at the office and wherever we are. When you return home, be happy with your family and relatives. There will be happiness and ease, keeping the five precepts, paying respects to the Buddha, chanting and doing sitting meditation.

If we don't keep the five precepts, pay respects to the Buddha, chant and do sitting meditation to give the mind a break from greed, hatred, delusion and clinging, our heart will have the level and status of an animal - an elephant, horse, cow, buffalo, pig, dog, crow, chicken¹². After they

¹² Apparently a proverbial set of animals that appears in children's songs and other contexts. In Thai: chang, maa, wua, kwaai – moo, maa, gaa, gai.

have eaten, they just lie down to sleep. Our status will equal theirs. Our heart still drops into the cycle of birth and death and gets caught up in clinging, delusion, delighting, gain and praise.

Whatever our profession or occupation may be, we have to be happy in doing our work. Our occupation has to be an honest one, that doesn't create distress for other people or animals. We have to give importance to the Dhamma, our family and society and not indulge in vices such as drinking beer and spirits, womanizing, petty theft, stealing and gambling.

If we are happy in doing our work, we will be rich and lucky. We will enjoy being diligent, honest and grateful and we will be rich and lucky already. Our speech, actions and manners will be good. Take His Majesty the King Bhumiphol Adulyadej as a role-model and example; he wasn't bold and arrogant.

Those who are mothers and fathers are role-models for their children and grandchildren, because they are established as their domestic Arahants, their family Arahants. The parents are the Arahants for the children, so we have to be domestic family Arahants. Our children will respect and revere us as their role-models. If we are happy and at ease and have Sīla and Dhamma, our children and grandchildren will take this as an example. If the parents are good, have Sīla, Dhamma and virtue, the children will be rich, lucky and prosperous.

May everyone be at ease. Now and then our heart drops into hell. When we get to hear the Dhamma of the Lord Buddha, we have to take it to heart. Although the Lord Buddha attained Parinibbāna already, the Dhamma - his Teaching - remains deathless in all times and eras.

The Saṅgha, the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras, the Lay-community and the relatives have made merit to offer it to Luang Por Nawm Namakāro who laid down the Saṅkhārā and passed away. On the physical level he can't come back; gone is gone.

I invite Luang Por Nawm to receive the merit that the Saṅgha, the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras, the lay-community and people from all walks of life have transferred to him on this occasion and I also ask Yohm Kovid and Yohm Khawn to receive our blessing and merit on this occasion. If they are already happy, may they attain the highest bliss and enter Nibbāna on this occasion.

May you be successful and may the virtue of the Triple Gem, the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha lead the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras, the laymen and laywomen and people from all walks of life to receive the highest blessing from the Noble Sammāsambuddha who is endowed with Noble purity, Noble pure wisdom and Noble pure compassion. May everyone reach the highest virtue, namely the fulfillment of your human potential, heavenly states and Nibbāna on this occasion.



Āmā Rajanī¹³ Cirakān

(13th September 2018)

(Background info: Āmā Rajanī was in her eighties when she died and had been a devoted disciple and supporter of Luang Por for many years. She came with her two daughters to all big events such as Vesakh, Asalha Pūja or cremations. The funeral services and her cremation did not happen at Wat Pah Subthawee but at a branch monastery closer to Bangkok.)

Tonight is the second night of making special merit for Āmā Rajanī Cirakān who laid down the Sankhārā and passed away. She was a very good person, especially good. She was an exemplary person, a role-model in leading an excellent life. She was worthy of veneration and established in the virtue of the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma, the Noble Saṅgha and the Great Kings. She had a very precious heart and everyone loved and respected her because her heart was good, fresh and beautiful. Her way of life was beautiful from her childhood until the end.

¹³ This is the lady that Luang Por respectfully refers to as “Tan” (s. footnote 4). Note the very formal tone of this talk, there were most likely many high-ranking people in the audience.

Her family is established in the Triple Gem, namely the virtue of the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma, the Noble Saṅgha, His Majesty the King Mahābhumiṃphol Adulyadej and his predecessors.

Āmā Rajanī was established in gratitude. Her daughters and her son are very good people. who are following in the footsteps of their father and His Majesty the King Mahābhumiṃphol Adulyadej. Āmā Rajanī's life was dedicated to goodness; she lived for returning the favours of her country, the Sāsanā and her parents.

As part of making this special merit for Āmā Rajanī there will be Abhidhamma-chanting, Dhamma-talks and the dedication of merit until the evening of Saturday, 15th September. On Sunday, 16th September at 11AM the Saṅgha will chant the Mātikā, receive funeral-cloth, expound the Dhamma, dedicate the merit and take Āmā's body to the crematorium here at Wat Thapthimdaeng. I'd like to invite everyone to attend this special ceremony of making merit for Āmā at the aforementioned time to see her off for the last time.

The Lord Buddha wanted everyone to understand that assembling to make merit for the deceased is a very good, an excellent thing. Everyone who was born as a human being should love each other, have loving-kindness and compassion for each other and give each other some warmth, because everyone who is assembled here will have to part from each other in not many years or decades from now.

Most people of older generations who lived in other provinces automatically went back to their home-village for cremations, when they heard that someone had died. They didn't have to be invited; the villagers spread the word and

everyone went by themselves. The funeral-rites for the deceased were regarded as important and the family and relatives, neighbours and friends from far and near assembled to make and transfer merit for the person who had passed away.

These times have passed and this good practice that has been held in the past has been abandoned. The new generations are giving little importance to the deceased, comparable to not giving importance to a high-ranking government official with fame who has retired from his position. They have the idea that because he is retired, he is useless.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to establish ourselves in virtue and not in money. We get a lot of merit and skill from attending funeral services. We get the chance to recollect the four Divine Messengers (Devadhūta), namely old age, sickness, death and the Samaṇa. It is very good to recollect death; it makes our heart peaceful. Our heart lets go, puts things down and becomes free.

The Lord Buddha asked Ānanda: "Ānanda, how many times a day do you recollect death?" Ānanda replied: "I recollect death a thousand times a day, Lord." The Buddha said: "Ānanda, you are still heedless. The Tathāgata (epithet of the Buddha) recollects death with every breath."¹⁴

When we go to the funeral-service of a deceased person, we become disenchanted and release our clinging. Everyone who is born into this world has to die in the end.

¹⁴ I have heard different versions of this story, but all I can find in the Pāli-Canon is the Maranassati-Sutta (AN 6.19) where the Buddha praises mindfulness of one's limited lifespan in terms of the time it takes to breathe or to swallow one morsel.

There is no multi-millionaire in the world who can take his money along. Rich people don't want to think about death. Then a "Sinsae"¹⁵ arises in this world...

A wicked Sinsae who likes to please those with a lot of money and tells them: "Don't think about death, because you will get depressed. Don't attend funeral-services, unless the deceased is a close relative. Don't go, or immediately things will happen, you won't be rich and lucky, you will get many issues and problems."

According to the Dhamma-teaching of the Lord Buddha this is correct: The Buddha taught to love each other, have Metta and compassion for each other and live in unity and harmony. Don't break the harmony, divide the unity. We have to look after and care for each other until the last breath and be established in virtue, namely gratitude. This is the mark of a truly good person. After someone's death we have to assemble to make merit and dedicate it to the departed person.

Therefore the funeral-service we have assembled here for is of great skill and merit, because what the departed need the most is merit.

Tonight we have assembled to make great merit in accordance with the instructions and the Dhamma-teaching of the Noble Sammāsambuddha, who is the Teacher of Devas and humans.

Explanation of the Dhamma-teaching of the Noble Sammāsambuddha on this second night of making special merit by an assembly that consists of the Saṅgha, the

¹⁵ This is a Chinese word for "doctor" or "teacher" that found its way into the Thai language. Google finds websites that offer Astrology and I-Ching. The "Sinsaes" themselves look like healers or spiritual advisers.

children and grandchildren, relatives and work-colleagues of the daughters and son as well as the lay-community who are keeping the precepts and practising Dhamma. They have come together to accumulate great merit by chanting the Abhidhamma, offering funeral-cloth, listening to the Dhamma and dedicating this special merit to Āmā Rajanī Cirakān who has laid down the Saṅkhārā and passed away without coming back.

May we give and send the special merit that the Saṅgha, the children and grandchildren, relatives and work-colleagues of the daughters and son as well as the lay-community who are keeping the precepts and practising Dhamma have made here tonight, to Āmā Rajanī Cirakān. May Āmā Rajanī Cirakān receive this blessing and rejoice in the merit bestowed upon her. If she has dukkha, may she be free from any dukkha. If she is already happy, may she attain the highest eternal bliss, go to heaven and reach Magga, Phala and Nibbāna.

May you be successful by the virtue of the Triple Gem, namely the virtue of the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Noble Saṅgha, and may everyone who has made this great merit here tonight progress and flourish by being established in virtue, by fulfilling their human potential, experiencing heavenly states and going to Nibbāna on this occasion.



*While making this merit,
no beings should be killed,
no beer and spirits should be drunk
and there should be no gambling.
This occasion is specifically for the dead
and not for the entertainment and comfort of
those who are still alive.*





Ākong Cakia Tang

(30th August 2019)

Tonight is the second night of making merit for Ākong Cakia Tang who has laid down the Saṅkhāra and passed away in accordance with nature.

Ākong Cakia Tang was a very good person – especially good. He has a lot of merit. He lived a long life of almost 100 years. From the beginning of his life until the end the purpose of his life was to do good, accumulate Pāramī and cultivate virtue in accordance with the teaching of the Lord Buddha. He was established in the Triple Gem and a grateful person. He was an excellent role-model for his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was a great man¹⁶ with a good heart; he was not moody or only pleasing himself. Everyone loved Ākong – really everyone.

The Saṅgha, children, offspring and relatives will continue making and transferring this special merit every night as well as offering Dāna every day. Sunday will be the last night of Abhidhamma-chanting with offering funeral-cloth and a Dhamma-talk. On Monday, 2nd September at 11AM

¹⁶ In Thai the word “Phu Yai” means both “adult” and “influential/important person”.

the Saṅgha, children, offspring and relatives will chant the Mātikā, offer funeral-cloth, hear the Dhamma, transfer the merit and take Ākong's body to the cremation-place here at Wat Pah Subthaweedhammārām. May everyone be aware of the times I have just mentioned.

All children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Ākong are very good people. They are following in the footsteps of the Noble Sammāsambuddha and have brought their merit here for a special benefit, for worshipping the highest virtue. The Saṅgha and the Krooba Ājāhn would like to congratulate you on doing what is good and right.

May everyone live in harmony, keep the five precepts, pay respects to the Buddha, do chanting and sitting-meditation and offer this great Dāna to Ākong, because the thing he needs the most is merit as provisions and Dhamma-supplies to lead him to a good destination, namely heaven, Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. May the wise and the philosophers, including the Saṅgha, the relatives and the friends perform these rituals for the deceased in accordance with the practice as taught by the Lord Buddha. While making this merit, no beings should be killed, no beer and spirits should be drunk and there should be no gambling. This occasion is specifically for the dead and not for the entertainment and comfort of those who are still alive. Then the ritual for Ākong will be a festival of practising in accordance with the Lord Buddha 100 percent. A Dāna of great merit and benefit is: offering Dāna to the Lord Buddha, to the Arahant-disciples of the Buddha and to the Noble Saṅgha of the Buddha including the Bhikkhus and Sāmaṇeras who are practising well and correctly.

Those, who practise focussing on Magga, Phala and Nibbāna, on being a Noble One with a pure heart free from greed, hatred and delusion, will transfer the merit to the deceased in a good way. Lay-people who are united and harmonious in making merit are another immeasurable force in transferring merit.

Merit-making can be regarded as an act of gratitude that we have been born into this world here together. We were not only born into this single life; those who are here today have been reborn many millions of times already.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to offer Dāna to transfer merit to our relatives and grandparents every day. For all of us there is more than this one birth; as long as we are not free from Kilesas and without Āsavā, there will be rebirth.

We see others make merit at the autumnal Chinese and Thai merit-making ceremonies¹⁷ that have the meaning of transferring merit to relatives and ancestors from all past existences. These festivals take place in China, Thailand and in many different forms around the world.

At the time of the Buddha, as Venerable Sāriputta was doing walking-meditation¹⁸, there was a Peta (hungry ghost) standing at the top of his walking-path. When Sāriputta saw it, he asked: "Who are you, that you come to stand here?" The Peta said this to Sāriputta: "I was your mother in a previous existence. I was reborn as a Peta and have a lot of dukkha and hardship. I found out that my former son is an Arahant-disciple of the Lord Buddha in this lifetime; the foremost disciple in wisdom. Therefore I came

¹⁷ This year on the 2nd September and marked as "Chinese Ghost Festival" in my calendar; probably a day of commemorating the dead similar to the way Halloween is celebrated in some countries.

¹⁸ This story is from the Petavathu ("Stories of the Departed", KN 7.14).

to ask for a share of your merit, so that I can gain release from this Kamma and retribution and go to a happy destination." Sāriputta acknowledged this and said: "Your son will transfer merit to you immediately, so that you can take birth in the happy destination of a heavenly realm and be free from Kamma and retribution."

The next day Venerable Sāriputta went on Piṇḍapāt (alms-round). The lay-people made a big affair of the food-offering to Sāriputta, because he is a grateful person, foremost in Sati and Paññā and the Arahant-disciple on the right hand side of the Lord Buddha. Ven. Sāriputta took the food and the requisites that the lay-people had offered to make a great Dāna and invited the Saṅgha to come and turn it into a Saṅghadāna to transfer the merit to to his mother who had the body of a Peta. The merit that Ven. Sāriputta transferred, made her receive the highest fruit and merit and she disappeared from the state of being a Peta and changed into a Deva immediately. Therefore merit is a necessity for the deceased.

May everyone reflect well on this topic. Don't forget about your relatives and ancestors; you have to make an effort and take special care. This is regarded as an important and fundamental matter. Mostly we don't understand this yet and allow our relatives and ancestors to be in (a state of) dukkha and hardship. We like to get carried away with delighting and clinging to happiness and comfort. We go to bed and get up late and don't join the alms-offering. When it comes to transferring merit to relatives and ancestors, some of these people don't go to the temple, don't pay respects to the Buddha. These people are extreme, they are only giving importance to eating, playing and travelling and money is their god.

For us here the parents and ancestors are an important matter and the practice is important. We need to have right view and right practice and be happy with practising. We must not follow Avijjā which is the root of greed, hatred and delusion. We have to go against the world and the flow, give importance to the Dhamma and establish ourself in it. We have to be committed to renunciation and practising in accordance with the Supreme Path, namely the Noble Eightfold Path, that we have to practise in daily life, which is the process and flow of Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. We need right view when we practise and renounce, then we will make progress in our business and work as well.

We were born - may everyone understand that we are born in order to train ourself to rely on our renunciation, diligence, sense of duty and patient endurance. When we are satisfied, it is called "Chanda" in Pāli, or satisfaction, contentment. If we are satisfied, we will be happy.

Reflect on this well: We have eyes to be wise, we have the six senses (Āyatana) to be wise, we study, listen to the Dhamma and do scientific research to gain wisdom. When we are wise, we have to practise. We have to renounce to gain merit. Renunciation will make us happy and bring merit. If we don't renounce, how are we going to be happy? When we are happy, don't become deluded by happiness! Otherwise it gets blocked up and is called "Taṇhā" (craving). The Lord Buddha wanted us to eat tasty food, but not to get attached to it, because we can't cling to anything; everything is not I, not Self. This life is about accumulating Pāramī and virtue.

The Lord Buddha wanted us to focus on the present, because the future comes from the present. We need a place to stand, walk and sit in the present moment. When the present is good, the future will be good as well. We will be able to understand the principle and get the point.

Everyone must take special care to develop him-/herself, so that the heart gets completely purified and can't be dominated by the hindrances.

May we give the special merit that the Krooba Ājāhns, the Saṅgha, the relatives and offspring and the lay-community have made on this occasion to Ākong Cakia Tang. We'd like to invite Ākong to receive the blessing of partaking in the merit that has been made here so well. If he has any dukkha, may he be free from any kind of dukkha. If he is already happy, may he reach Magga, Phala and Nibbāna on this occasion.

May you be successful and may everyone who is assembled here for renouncing and sending the merit to Ākong take the virtue of the Triple Gem to progress and flourish and reach the highest virtue, namely the fulfillment of of your human potential, heavenly states and Nibbāna on this occasion.



Phoonsak Tangthiankun (Yohm Tia)

(10th February 2017)

(Yohm Tia was highly respected both professionally and as a person. He worked in the finance-department of Channel 7 and after his retirement offered his service and expertise to Luang Por. On the 8th February he suffered a severe heart-attack as he was visiting a building-site with Luang Por. Yohm Tia was taken to the nearest hospital and then transferred to Maharat hospital for an operation, but died in intensive-care the day after because his brain had been without oxygen for too long.)

Tonight is an occasion of making special merit for Yohm Tia Phoonsak Tangthienkun who has laid down the Saṅkhārā at 11.17 AM on the 9th February 2017.

Yohm Tia was the best person in the world. He was established in goodness and the Triple Gem. Moreover he was committed to working, renouncing, taking responsibility, being honest and of good conduct. He gave importance to Sila, Dhamma and virtue and saw the importance of the public welfare. He made merit until the end of his life. He worked for and looked after the development of Wat Bu

Chao Khun¹⁹ together with the villagers of Bu Chao Khun, Subthaweehookoon and Klong Bplaakang and many more villages that helped with the work.

He²⁰ had a heart disease and had undergone bypass-surgery already. The day he died an artery was blocked by a blood-clot and he passed out immediately. He was taken to Maharat Hospital in Nakhon Ratchasīmā, but it was too late to help him, because by then his brain had been without fresh blood with oxygen for a long time. So he laid down the Saṅkhārā.

He can be regarded as a person with merit, that he was able to pass away easily without prior injuries or great pain. We experience the loss of good people, because this is a natural state that all people will arrive at. The life-span of our body is no longer than 100 years, only few people live beyond that. Being born into this existence can be regarded as a precious life. We have the opportunity to create causes and conditions for Nibbāna. Nothing in this world follows our wishes; our body also does not act as we like; other people and external things mainly are not as we wish. We don't want to age, but still age, we don't want to get sick and die but get sick and die nevertheless.

Reflect on this well, this is a good thing and useful too. When things don't go our way, it is good, because we get a reason for creating Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. Being human beings, we are looking for things that please us and this is causing us problems. The Lord Buddha saw the danger in Saṃsāra. It is not right, if we are following our wishes. It is the cause that makes us get reborn in the cycle of birth and death.

¹⁹ This is the village-temple nearest to Wat Pah Subthawee.

²⁰ Here Luang Por uses the respectful pronoun "Tan" again.

The best thing is to gain a new understanding through the wisdom of the Lord Buddha. He taught²¹: "Through the round of many births I wandered without reward and rest seeking the housebuilder. Painful is birth again and again." As the Buddha got enlightened he stopped creating existences and births and cut off craving. Thus he turned into the Lord Buddha and became the Teacher of humans and Devas. He attained the highest bliss. We have to be able to stop ourself and follow in the footsteps of the Lord Buddha. Acting in accordance with the Lord Buddha, the Dhamma and the Vinaya, that were explained by him, is a practice in body, speech and mind. This is called being established in the Triple Gem.

We want to get the greatest happiness in the world by renouncing and making the heart peaceful. What do we have to do to become happy? We must not follow our Kilesas, our greed, hatred and delusion. In order to develop the heart and mind we have to develop the Indriyā in our daily life at the same time as we are working to make a living.

The Lord Buddha taught us to enter heavenly states and Nibbāna before we die. We don't have to wait until we are old before we do it. We have to do it gradually and do it today. We can do it right now. Sometimes our heart is not human. Sometimes it resembles the heart of an animal or an Āsura (demon, titan). When we lose Sati our heart can be like the heart of an animal there and then.

We have to train in stopping ourselves through Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā and develop the Indriyā through not following our emotions and wishes. Generally we have many Kilesas and a lot of greed, hatred and delusion and we are very selfish. We can't follow our desires; we have to follow the Buddha, which is the path to liberation. Doing

good is regarded as the greatest happiness in the world. We have no certainty about when we are going to lay down the Saṅkhārā and leave this world. We are waiting to become rich, waiting for our children to get married and waiting for everything to be perfect. The Lord Buddha called this "carelessness, delighting and a waste of time". We have little time and have to hurry to do the important things before time is up. This is the correct way. We have to force ourselves to renounce a lot, to keep the precepts pure and to maintain Samādhi in all postures very often. We should be happy pursuing this and happy breathing in and breathing out, being completely at ease. Our heart will be a good heart and our Sati-Sampajañña will come back. We can do this in every moment at all times, not only when we do sitting-meditation – all the time, in every posture. We have to breathe in and out gaining Sati, being completely aware of ourselves. When you pay respects to the Buddha, do it well to become happy and peaceful through Sati, complete awareness. We have to do this for many days, months and years until our Indriyā ripen to maturity. We can't separate our Dhamma-practice from our work, because our actions, speech and thinking have to be paired with Dhamma day and night. May Khun Yohm Tia Phoosak Tangthiankun rejoice and be perfectly happy with the merit that the assembly of the Krooba Ājāhn, the Saṅgha and the lay-community have made and transferred to him. We will continue to make merit in this way until the 15th February; on the 16th February at 11AM we will chant the Mātikā, offer funeral-cloth, hear a Dhamma-talk and take the body to the cremation-place here at Wat Pah Subthawee Dhammārām and finish the ritual probably about mid-day.

Phenomena are phenomena.

*They age, get sick and die
by themselves.*

They don't have mercy on anyone.

*Good or bad people,
they age, get sick, die
and get separated in this way.*

*May everyone reflect
with Sati and Paññā:*

*What are we going to get
in this world,
when there is nothing to get?*