

The Heart of Buddhism



Luang Pu Dteu Acaladhammo

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

Luang Pu Dteu was one of the first-generation disciples of Luang Pu Mun, remaining as a monk in the Mahā-Nikāya sect for many years. Following Luang Pu Mun up into the north of Thailand (as he became Luang Pu Mun's most trusted disciple), he re-ordained in the Dhammayut sect after 19 years in the monkhood, taking Tan Chao Khun Upāli Guṇūpamājaan as his preceptor at Wat Chedi Luang in Chiang Mai.

Two notable things about Luang Pu Dteu's character were that he was utterly eccentric and unconventional, and that he was completely fearless. He had a strange affinity with wild tigers, who could often be found wherever he stayed, ostensibly looking out for him. His life story is arguably the most entertaining of any of the great forest ajaans – chock full of incredible incidents, often involving psychic powers or miraculous events. Beneath all these externals though, were great accomplishments in Dhamma. He was widely regarded as an arahant possessed of all the psychic powers and analytical knowledges that can be attained.

All of this came together in the way that he would teach Dhamma. His Dhamma talks were like absolutely no one else's – unpredictable, elliptical, profound, sometimes uproariously funny and crudely profane. The talk that follows is a fairly typical example.

Luang Pu Dteu had a habit of politely addressing his audience as 'all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise', and this seems to be appropriate for more than just politeness: this talk probably won't seem particularly intelligible to beginners or mere scholars of the teachings – they are really coming from a place of meditative development, and will be most useful to meditators. For example, his emphasis on the precepts of *sīla* – virtue – repeatedly explaining how they are ultimately one and the same with transcendent Dhamma, may come across as surprising to some readers...

Cutting through any and all superficialities, he presents 'The Heart of Buddhism' – the Buddha's teaching in all its modes and permutations – as the simply the essential truth of the human heart.

I would like to offer my respect and gratitude to Luang Pu Sang Saṅkicco, abbot of Wat Pah Ajaan Dteu (and Luang Pu Dteu's nephew), for his permission to make this available as a free gift of Dhamma.

Hāsapañño Bhikkhu
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พระอาจารย์ หลวงปู่ดี อจลธมฺโม

LUANG PU DTEU ACALADHAMMO

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THE HEART OF BUDDHISM

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa
Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa
Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa

A single mind presents itself as four minds: the path of stream-entry is one single mind, the path of once-return is one single mind, the path of non-return is one single mind, and the path of arahantship is one single mind here.

To say ‘four minds’ here is to talk about their properties and levels of consciousness – there are four properties, there are four levels of consciousness. This is given the names *cittānupassanā* and **the mind**; they cannot be separate from each other. Knowing, and the mind, cannot be separate from each other.

As for the eyes, they are not the mind – it’s called ‘visual cognisance’. The ears are not the mind – it’s called ‘auditory cognisance’. The nose is not the mind – it’s called ‘olfactory cognisance’. The mouth is not the mind – it’s called ‘gustatory cognisance’.

If our mind goes anywhere – to go create goodness or create evil – it has to rely on visual cognisance. To see anything, we have to rely on the eyes. To hear sounds of singing or music in order to get absorbed in enjoyment, we have to rely on auditory cognisance as that which listens to judge however beautiful or melodious it is.

The mind is what knows when we smell a fragrance or a stench. The mind (*jit*) is what knows – thus we give it the name *cittānupassanā-sati’paṭṭhānam*.

The eyes and the mind cannot be separate from each other. Whenever we die, that’s when they part. Here, you guys:

1. The mind that doesn’t kill living beings – this is the stream-enterer’s



mind, the once-returner's mind; it is the non-returner's mind, the arahant's mind. It is holy Buddhho, one single mind.

2. The mind that doesn't steal – that mind is the stream-enterer, the once-returner, the non-returner, the arahant.
3. The mind that goes forth to ordain, without a husband or a wife – that mind is the stream-enterer, the once-returner, the non-returner, the arahant.
4. The mind that isn't given to lying, doesn't tell falsehoods – that mind is the stream-enterer, the once-returner, the non-returner, the arahant.
5. The mind that doesn't consume intoxicants – that mind is the stream-enterer, the once-returner, the non-returner, the arahant.

This is explaining it by way of the discourses. May all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, really see this.

If I were to explain it at the highest level, this lies in the heart of each and every person:

1. The mind that doesn't kill living beings: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.
2. The mind that doesn't steal: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.
3. The mind that goes forth to ordain, without a husband or wife: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.
4. The mind that isn't given to lying: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.
5. The mind that doesn't consume intoxicants: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

Buddho is virtue, Buddhho is *jhāna*, Buddhho is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.



Dhammo is virtue, Dhammo is *jhāna*, Dhammo is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

Saṅgho is virtue, Saṅgho is *jhāna*, Saṅgho is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

Good will is virtue, good will is *jhāna*, good will is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

Compassion is virtue, compassion is *jhāna*, compassion is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

Appreciative joy is virtue, appreciative joy is *jhāna*, appreciative joy is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

Equanimity is virtue, equanimity is *jhāna*, equanimity is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

A mind has bodily form, but the mind isn't infatuated with bodily form: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

A mind has sensation, but the mind isn't infatuated with sensation: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

A mind has perception, but the mind isn't infatuated with perception: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

A mind has mental fabrications, but the mind isn't infatuated with mental fabrications: the mind is virtue, the mind is *jhāna*, the mind is Nibbāna. It lies in the hearts of each and every one of us.

The Great and Virtuous – who is that? Our venerable father, our venerable mother.

Our fully enlightened Buddha took birth due to his great and virtuous father, meaning **Suddhodana**, and his great and virtuous mother, meaning the **Lady Siri-Mahā-Māyā**. It was where a superlative Dhamma was born.

The highest and most distinguished point lies in our hearts, which



took birth due to our father and mother.

If anybody doesn't believe this, take a pig for your wife. The Year of the Pig alludes to the pig. Pigs are better than people. People can't compare with pigs.

Pigs are better than people. A pig's leg – people will eat it; but a person's leg, nobody will eat that. A pig's testicles – people will eat them; but a person's testicles, nobody will eat those. A pig's vagina – people will eat it; but a person's vagina, nobody will eat that... A pig's vagina: if someone whose pronunciation is not clear, that is, who talks like a drunkard, slurred and awkward – if they eat it, the condition will improve.

Pig oil is a commodity for sale all over the Kingdom of Thailand. It's considered edible everywhere, not just for particular nationalities – everyone eats it. But human oil, nobody eats that.

Pig shit gets taken to make fertiliser – it can be used in the fields, on vegetable gardens, in orchards... But human shit, nobody wants that.

A pig's head, a pig's liver – people eat it. A dead person's head – nobody will eat that. A pig's head, a pig's nose, a pig's tongue, a pig's brain – they can be boiled and eaten by all nationalities. A person's mouth, a person's tongue, a person's brain, a person's head... nobody will eat those.

A pig's intestines are used to make sausages and can be eaten. A pig's liver, a pig's stomach can be eaten. But a person's liver, a person's intestines, a person's stomach – nobody will eat those.

Pig's hair is a commodity for sale. It can be made into paintbrushes anywhere. But the body-hair and head-hair of people is cut off and just thrown away – nobody wants it.

The hair of male lay-disciples – it has to be cut once a month or twice a month at a cost of 4 or 5 baht per time. Furthermore, for the hair of the ruling classes it's even more expensive – as well as the price of a bottle of hair-oil per month...

When we run out of goodness (that sustains our human life), **we lose thousands of baht** (for the costs of a funeral). **When we die, the fire eats that all up.**



Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, I, **Phra Ajaan Dteu**, or **Luang Pu Dteu**, offer this discernment and insight-knowledge – presenting it to all of you, right up to the rulers and civil servants, male and female lay-disciples, for starters.

If it is not true as Luang Pu has described, let shit be thrown in my face!

One – someone developing *jhāna* has to know *jhāna*. If you don't know *jhāna*, you'll sit there wanting *jhāna* until your back breaks and you won't realise Nibbāna in accordance with your aspirations.

Two – someone developing *jhāna* has to know *jhāna* for Nibbāna to be realised, because *jhāna* and Nibbāna are a pair – they can't be isolated from each other. It's like the moon and the stars – wherever the moon is, the stars will be there.

To say '**not knowing *jhāna*, not knowing Nibbāna**', this is a mode of **the mind** called the '**worldly mind**' ('*lokiya-jit*').

The '**transcendent mind**' ('*lok'uttara-jit*') is the mind that will know *jhāna*, because:

The path of stream-entry, the fruit of stream-entry, is the first *jhāna*.

The path of once-return, the fruit of once-return, is the second *jhāna*.

The path of non-return, the fruit of non-return, is the third *jhāna*.

The path of arahantship, the fruit of arahantship, is the fourth *jhāna*.

***Jhāna* is the dwelling place of the Buddha. Nibbāna is, namely, just the heart of an arahant.**

***Jhāna* is the root of the hair, Nibbāna is the strand of that hair.** This is how they go together.

Firstly, **the meditation-word 'Buddho'** is virtue, 'Buddho' is *jhāna*, 'Buddho' is Nibbāna.

Secondly, **threshold (concentration) is the abiding place of the mind:** 'Dhammo' is virtue, 'Dhammo' is *jhāna*, 'Dhammo' is Nibbāna.

Thirdly, '**Saṅgho**' is virtue, 'Saṅgho' is *jhāna*, 'Saṅgho' is Nibbāna.



Fourthly, '**knowledge in accordance**': you have to watch the in-and-out breathing – hatred, delusion, views, the heart that is prone to delusion and views, comes to an end. The heart that was prone to hatred – the heart is an arahant. The heart that was prone to delusion – the heart is an arahant. The heart that was prone to views – this heart is an arahant.

Fifthly, '**emergence**' ('gotra'): dwelling within bodily form without being antagonistic towards bodily form, dwelling within sensation without being antagonistic towards sensation, dwelling within perception without being antagonistic towards perception, dwelling within mental fabrications without being antagonistic towards mental fabrications, dwelling within cognisance without being antagonistic towards cognisance – our hearts are Nibbāna.

Sixthly, the path of stream-entry is the heart, the fruit of stream-entry is the heart; the path of once-return is the heart, the fruit of once-return is the heart; the path of non-return is the heart, the fruit of non-return is the heart; the path of arahantship is the heart, the fruit of arahantship is the heart.

Abandon. *Upādisesa-nibbāna* – defilements are completely absent from one's disposition. The defilements of delusion are gone. The defilements of views are gone. All that remains is a clean heart removed from the defilements that are completely absent from one's disposition. The moon travels above the firmament of the sky with nothing able to hinder it...

Vāyo-dhātu – which means **wind** – from all four directions can't hinder the moon. Wind is just wind; the moon is not broken up or snuffed out. The moon is like that.

Āpo-dhātu – which means **water** – rain falling in little drops, large or small, cannot hinder the moon. It's like what we can all see nowadays... it can be compared with taro leaves. Water naturally can't soak the leaf so that it becomes saturated within. Even if rain falls right on the taro leaf, however much, the rainwater is not able to seep into the leaf to any extent, because the taro leaf does not absorb water at all.

It's like the moon. The moon travels over Burma. The Burmese, both young and old, all go and worship the moon. The moon is indifferent. It



doesn't acknowledge the words of the Burmese or become a refuge for them in any way.

Going over the country of the Mons, the moon remains indifferent. The Mons curse and revile it to every last household of the Mons, and the moon remains indifferent.

Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, this can thus be called the 'fulfilment of the holy life' – that is: 1) Not killing living beings is called the holy life of the Buddha. 2) Not stealing is the holy life of the Buddha. 3) Not being addicted to sensuality is called the holy life of the Buddha. 4) The mind that isn't given to lying – that is, telling falsehoods – is called the holy life of the Buddha. 5) Not consuming alcohol and intoxicants is called the holy life of the Buddha.

It's just like the moon. The moon doesn't kill living beings; the moon doesn't steal; the moon isn't addicted to sensuality; the moon doesn't tell falsehoods; the moon doesn't drink alcohol. This is called, '**the fulfilment of the holy life**'.

The sounds of '**moon**' and '**life**' are pronounced the same, therefore we take them and compare them like this.¹

When arahants sit, they sit in Nibbāna. When they lay down, they lay in Nibbāna. When they walk, they walk in Nibbāna. When they eat, they eat in Nibbāna. But the five aggregates that can be **appropriated and clung to** haven't yet ceased.

The arahant who was our fully enlightened Buddha thus led around the five aggregates of his family lineage, carrying his bowl and proclaiming his dispensation, for 45 years. This is called **upādisesa** – he had entered Nibbana, beyond the wastelands of birth. There wouldn't have to be any further states of birth.

Tesam vūpasamo sukho – sensation breaks apart, sensation dies; perception breaks apart, perception dies; mental fabrications break apart, mental fabrications die; cognisance breaks apart, cognisance dies.

1. In Thai, the moon is 'phra jan' (พระจันทร์) and 'holy-life' is 'prohma-jan' (พรหมจรรย). จันทร์ ('moon') and จรรย ('life, conduct') are pronounced exactly the same.



The Buddha Gotama didn't destroy bodily form – bodily form grows old and decrepit, sensation grows old and decrepit, cognisance grows old and decrepit... **Only our hearts don't get old and decrepit.**

Rūpaṃ aniccaṃ – Form arises as something that is uncertain; it changes, transforms and becomes otherwise as a function of its nature. However our minds plead with it, it doesn't listen.

Akālika – the property of space just is the way it is.

Cakkhu'ndriyaṃ – look at our eyes. The eyes break apart, the eyes disintegrate. We can't stop the eyes (from this).

Sot'indriyaṃ – look at our ears. The ears become decrepit, the ears die. We can't stop the ears.

Ghān'indriyaṃ – see and understand our nose. The nose catches a cold which singles out the nose, or there is sinusitis or rhinitis; we can't stop this.

Jivh'indriyaṃ – look at our tongue. The mouth and the tongue catch a cold or a cough – we walk and we cough, we eat and we cough, we drink and we cough; we're just coughing, coming and going.

Ānāpāna – this is the Pāli language; in English, it's called 'breath'. With bodily form there is breath, with sensation there is breath, with perception there is breath, with mental fabrications there is breath, with cognisance there is breath. When breath is finished and done, it's called 'being dead'. If you have money, gold or jewels, when you die you will abandon and lose that wealth. If you have a daughter, you will pass away from your daughter. If you have a son, you will pass away from your son. If you have a husband, you will pass away from your husband. If you have a wife, you will pass away from your wife. If you have a father, you will pass away from your father. If you have a mother, you will pass away from your mother.

If we have a fortune of up to 80,000 or 90,000, it's just neutral stuff that exists in the world. When we pass away, we have to throw it all away.

If we haven't yet died, we have to bring ourselves to develop goodness and develop wholesomeness to a sufficient extent. Once we have died that goodness will be a refuge for us, something for us to rely on.



The ways in which that goodness arises by way of the body, I will elaborate according to the discourses:

Anavajjāni kammāni – people born into this world who work in ways free from blame and harm: this has only benefits, in this life and future lives. It is a supporting condition for us, who are developing spiritual perfections.

One, casting a statue of the Buddha, building a chedi, building a monastery or a hermitage, an Uposatha hall or a dwelling, within religion – anyone who has done this is an excellent person, someone who has not wasted their birth as a human being and their encounter with the dispensation of the Buddha.

Chāyāva – it's like the shadow that follows us all of the time: it's natural that when we sit, the shadow sits; we lay down, the shadow lays down; we walk and the shadow walks – the goodness and wholesomeness that we have developed comes and envelops our hearts.

If we accept the **five-fold virtue**, when we sit, we sit within the five-fold virtue; when we lay down, we lay within the five-fold virtue; when we walk, we walk within the five-fold virtue.

If we accept the **eight-fold virtue**, when we stand, walk, sit or lay down anywhere, we do it completely with the eight-fold virtue. The **ten-fold virtue** is exactly the same.

If we accept the **227-fold virtue**, when we lay down, we lay within the 227-fold virtue. If we stand, walk, sit or lay down, we are within virtue.

When we arrive at 'Buddho', when we sit, we sit 'Buddho'; when we lay down, we lay 'Buddho'; when we walk, we walk 'Buddho'.

'Dhammo' – when we arrive at it, when we sit, we sit 'Dhammo'; when we lay down, we lay within 'Dhammo'; when we walk, we walk within 'Dhammo'. **'Saṅgho'** is the same.

'Tesam' – After death, everything is thrown away. **'Kesā'** – hair of the head gets burned up in the fire. We can't take it with us. **'Lomā'** – hair of the body gets burned up in the fire. **'Nakhā'** – toenails and fingernails: the fire burns them all up. **'Dantā'** – (teeth for) chewing and grinding like a



mortar for betel or chillies: the fire eats them all up. **‘Atthī’** – three hundred bones: shin-bones, thigh-bones, arm-bones, rib-bones, neck-bones, other bones, jaw-bones, skull-bones – the fire eats them all up. **‘Hadayamī’** – the heart, the dwelling place of the mind and heart: the fire eats it all up. Whatever it is, the fire eats it all up. They can’t be ours in any way.

Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise – men can be skilled in Dhamma, women can be skilled in Dhamma – be determined to investigate that **if we do good, we experience goodness; if we do evil, we experience evil.** If we farm, we get rice to eat. If we take a husband or take a wife, we get sons and daughters. Support this dispensation of the perfectly enlightened Buddha.

All of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, **‘opanāyiko’** – bring things inwards to see. See what? To see our hearts – every one of us. When you really arrive at ‘Buddho’, the place where ‘Buddho’ abides is the six heavens.

The six heavens – there is **the level of the Four Great Kings, the level of the Thirty-Three, the level of the ‘Yāmā’, the level of the Delighted, the level of Those-Who-Delight-in-Creation, and the level of Those-Who-Wield-Power-Over-the-Creations-of-Others.**

The six heavens – men with ‘Buddho’ and women with ‘Buddho’ can abide at whatever level they aspire to.

The **Retinue of Brahma**, up to the **Supreme Brahmas** – that is, the **sixteen levels of the Brahma world** – one can abide according to one’s aspirations.

Men with ‘Saṅgho’ or women with ‘Saṅgho’... The abiding place of ‘Saṅgho’ is the levels of the **Pure Abodes.**

The path of non-return, the fruit of non-return – passing away from there, one enters Nibbāna. ***Etam Buddhāna sāsanaṃ.***

Phra Ajaan Dteu, or **Luang Pu Dteu Acaladhammo**, is a disciple of Tan Chao Khun **Phra Upālī Guṇūpamājaan** of **Wat Supatanārām**, Ubon Ratchathani province. **Phra Piya Mahārāt**, or **King Chulalongkorn** (Rāma V), invited him to stay at **Wat Thepsirindharawaat.**



Krom Phaya Sawat and Tan Yaa invited Tan Chao Khun **Phra Upālī Guṇūpamājaan**, together with **Luang Pu Mun Bhūridatta Thera**, to stay at **Wat Boromniwaat**. As for Wat Sara Pathum, Luang Por **Phra Ajaan Noo** went to stay there and was given the royal title **Chao Khun Kitti Thera**. Afterwards, he became Chao Khun **Phra Paññābhisāla Thera** as the abbot of **Wat Sara Pathum** (Wat Pathumwanārām), and he entered (final) Nibbāna right there. As for **Tan Chao Khun Upālī**, he went to (final) Nibbāna at **Wat Boromniwaat**.

As for **Tan Ajaan Mun**, Mr. Dtieng Sirikhan invited him to come to **Wat Suddhāwaat** in Sakon Nakhorn province, and he entered (final) Nibbāna right there.

The gāthā on the qualities of the Buddha that I have talked about is a veneration of the Buddha, a veneration of the Dhamma, and a veneration of the Saṅgha for all of you, both male and female lay-disciples.

In what has been said here, in the case that I have spoken wrongly or recklessly in any way, may all of you, both male lay-disciples and female lay-disciples – every single one of you – please forgive me.

If it is the case that the Dhamma teachings that I have described here have been correct according to what has been taught (by the Buddha) – not in opposition to the foundation of the Thai Saṅgha – all of you should be delighted and pleased with it.

And you should bring the teachings of the Dhamma that I have described here inwards to practise in your body, in your speech and in your heart – both male and female lay-disciples.

Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ. Nibbāna paccayo hotu. Allow me to talk about someone who enters Nibbāna, released from the wastelands of birth without having to return, which is called ‘**the happiness of liberation**’, transcending this world.

The lord Buddha has proclaimed to us: all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, firmly determined, make Nibbāna a realisation without any doubt remaining! ***Upasamānussati*** – recollect the qualities of Nibbāna. Nibbāna just lies within our hearts.



The heart that doesn't kill living beings – a good heart – is virtue, is *jhāna*; the heart is Nibbāna.

The heart that doesn't consume intoxicants, doesn't drink alcohol: the heart is virtue, is *jhāna*; the heart is Nibbāna.

That heart that doesn't strike a gong, bang a drum, play a guitar or blow on a horn or flute: the heart is virtue, is *jhāna*; the heart is Nibbāna.

The heart that doesn't apply or spread fragrances (on oneself) like villagers: the heart is virtue, is *jhāna*; the heart is Nibbāna.

The heart that doesn't lie down on resting places stuffed high and luxuriously with kapok and cotton like a noble king: the heart is virtue, is *jhāna*; the heart is Nibbāna.

Jāta-rūpa-rajjata – money, coins, or the paper bills that scholars have created for use these days to be used as the fortunes of the king – America has been the one to help Thailand develop – if we have it, we use it; if we don't have it, we don't use it: our heart is virtue, is *jhāna*; the heart is Nibbāna.

Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, *vipassanā* ajaans, you should know with the heart. The foolishness of killing living beings doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of stealing property doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of being given to lying doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of addiction to sensuality doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of consuming intoxicants doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of eating dinner doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of striking a gong, banging a drum, playing a guitar or blowing on a horn or flute doesn't exist for the heart. The heart that is not foolish: searching out fragrances doesn't exist for the heart. The heart that is not foolish: lying down on a resting place stuffed high and luxuriously with kapok and cotton doesn't exist for the heart. The foolishness of ***jāta-rūpa-rajjata*** – coins and currency – doesn't exist for the heart. Thus it will be Nibbāna.

Tesaṃ vūpasamo sukho – form breaks apart, form dies; from the head to the feet, the feet to the head.

The property of earth, that is, bones and lumps of flesh, is not



Nibbāna. **Tesamī** – the 13 aspects of the property of water² are not Nibbāna. **Tesamī** – perception, the in-and-out breathing: know wind, know the nose. Wind comes in, wind goes out; you can't prevent wind. Know the mouth, know the throat as the dwelling place of wind. Know the 'heavy opening' – the 'light opening' passes urine, the 'heavy opening' passes excrement. You can't prevent wind.

Tesamī – fabrications starting from the bottom – namely, the legs: you can't prevent the legs from getting old. Fabrications in the middle, namely, the arms – or at the top, namely, the head: you can't prevent them from getting old.

Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, **the heart is something that doesn't die**. That which dies: **bodily form** is the substance of what dies; what dies is the substance of **sensation**; what dies is the substance of **perception**; what dies is the substance of **mental fabrications**; what dies is the substance of **cognisance**.

That which doesn't die is, namely, **the heart that is Nibbāna**.

An unfabricated state: states of form and states of sensation don't exist for the heart. **An unfabricated property**: the property of sensation doesn't exist for the heart. **An unfabricated condition**...

The heart has been released from form. The heart has been released from sensation – the heart doesn't have sensation. The heart has been released from perception – the heart doesn't have perception. The heart doesn't have mental fabrications – the heart has been released from mental fabrications. The heart doesn't have cognisance – the heart has been released from cognisance. The heart is just Nibbāna.

When the heart is Nibbāna, jāti – birth – doesn't exist for the heart. **Jarā** – aging – doesn't exist for the heart. **Byādhi** – affliction, fever, heat, cold – doesn't exist for the heart. **Marāṇa** – death – and birth don't exist for the heart. The heart is Nibbāna, released from birth, aging and death –

2. Bile, phlegm, lymph, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, mucus, synovial fluid, urine... These are usually the 12 aspects of the property of water that are apparent when investigating the body – '13' here may be an error in transcription in the Thai version.



it doesn't have to come back to take birth, giving it suffering and hardship in this world.

In the **Nibbāna Sutta**, **Phra Anuruddha Ajaan** spread out and divided the cremated remains of the bones of the Buddha, and distributed the Buddha's relics to 16 cities. What has come to Thailand is in the old city of Kambuja, or the **city of Champasak**. Up in the north, there are the cities of **Luang Prabang**, **Chiang Khwang** and **Chiang Kham**. **North** as far as the city of **Chiang Rung**, and **south** as far as the city of **Champasak**, was the **ancient state of the land of Ābhassarā**.

Now, the **state of Ābhassarā** has disappeared. It became the **province of Sakon Nakhorn**. Disappearing a second time, it was then given the name of the **province of Nakhorn Phanom**. Relics from the Buddha's chest – 13 relics from the right breast and 12 relics from the left breast – **the Arahant Kassapa** is the one who brought them and installed them in a chedi: it was thus given the name **That Phanom**³ in the time of **Phra Chao Khamang**, the ruler of this area.

To translate it into English, *Nibbānam paramam suññam* ('Nibbāna is the ultimate emptiness') means it is emptied of form, emptied of sensation, emptied of perception, emptied of mental fabrications and emptied of cognisance.

The heart still continues. *Nakkhattato vā manussato vā* – it's like stars and constellations: that is, there are stars in space. Human beings have optic nerves – when we lift our eyes upwards into space, we see constellations and stars filling the sky. So we have determined an earth and a sky.

The **lord Buddha Kakusandho** developed spiritual perfections to the point that his life was 60,000 years long, because he had developed spiritual perfections for 16 incalculable periods of time and 100,000 great aeons. After he had entered Nibbāna, his dispensation lasted for another 60,000 years, equal to his life-span – altogether 120,000 years. The moon didn't die, the stars didn't die – they were still there.

A second lord Buddha had the name **Konāgamano**.

3. 'nom' means breast.



A third, the lord Buddha **Kassapa**, developed spiritual perfections for 7 incalculable periods of time and 100,000 great aeons. When his perfections were mature and strong, he came to be born in this world. His life was 10,000 years long. His dispensation lasted (another) 10,000 years – altogether his dispensation lasted 20,000 years and then was extinguished. The moon didn't die, the stars didn't die – they were still there.

A fourth, the lord Buddha **Gotama**, developed spiritual perfections for 4 incalculable periods of time and 100,000 great aeons. He came to be born in this world and taught human beings, devatās, male lay-disciples and female lay-disciples. His took in his son, who offered himself as a disciple of the first rank. 64,000 court and government officials became arahants. And young girls practising the holy-life ordained as female novices: when they reached 20 years of age, they offered themselves to the **Venerable Lady Gotamī**, who was the mother of Yasodharā Bimbā, to be their preceptor, ordaining as bhikkhūṇīs – everywhere within the 16 city-states. Many of them became arahants.

Three years after the Buddha's *parinibbāna*, **Phra Mahā Kassapa** invited the **Buddha's relics** to come and be installed in a chedi for us Thai people in That Phanom district, Nakhorn Phanom province.

At that time, **Phra Chao Phaya Jan** was the ruler of the city of Sakon Nakhorn and was thus the ruler of the land. There was one young woman who, reaching the age of 16, went to ordain as a white-robed nun. Before that, her father had ordained as a disciple of **Phra Kassapa** and had reached the state of a non-returner.

Her father was reborn as a Brahma (in the Pure Abodes). As for the daughter, she went to the sixth level of heaven (the Devas-Who-Wield-Power-Over-the-Creations-of-Others). When that state deteriorated and she reached the time of passing away, she came down to be born in her original city. Born into this life, she was the eldest sister with five younger sisters and five younger brothers.

As for that eldest sister, she safeguarded the eight-fold virtue her entire life – she hadn't forgotten the Dhamma from former times: the Ratana Sutta of the scriptures – *idam-pi buddhe ratanam...*, the Maṅgala



Sutta – called the *mātā-pitu*, the Dhammacakka, the six heavens and the sixteen Brahma realms...

At this time, she has passed away. Before she passed away, she had experience of entering *jhāna*. And her father (from the past life) who was a non-returner, dwelling in the Pure Abodes, sent his celestial consciousness, his celestial mind, down to be able to teach his daughter. As for the daughter, she was clairvoyant, clairaudient, with a rarefied mind, and was able to receive it.

Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise – those who practise truly, do it truly, naturally see right at their own hearts.

This accords with what the Buddha taught in the saying “*mano pubb’āṅgamā dhammā, mano seṭṭhā mano mayā*” – all things are brought to their state by the heart; the heart is the important thing, the heart presides over all. Consciousness, that is, the heart, is the root and foundation of everything.

The second child, the mother of Tan Chao Khun Upālī – when it came to the eighth-day lunar observance, she would dress in white, but on normal days she would wear a dark skirt like a villager. When she approached her time of death, she meditated in her room – keeping virtue and meditating throughout the day. She heard a sound in her ear that said: “**Madam, come on up!**”

She replied: “**Wait a bit, wait a bit.**” Like this – she was talking by herself. Her daughters were doubtful and thus sent a grand-daughter to respectfully tell **Tan Chao Khun Upālī** about it. Tan Chao Khun Upālī told the grand-daughter to go see his youngest brother: that is, **Tan Chao Khun Silaworakhun**.

Once Tan Chao Khun Silaworakhun knew about it, he lit some incense and candles and paid respects to the Buddha statue, paid respects to the relics, and made a determination upon his integrity, asking for goodness and wholesomeness to help protect and watch over the consciousness of his mother. When he was finished, he left the monastery to go (to her).

Once he arrived, he asked in the Isaan dialect: “What has mother been



saying? Who were you talking to? In the middle of the night, you were mumbling all by yourself. You're not losing it, are you?"

As for his mother, she answered, "Chao Khun, my dear son, I'm not losing it at all. I was talking to some grand old ladies – the **Lady Sujātā** and the **Lady Sudhammā**. They wanted to come receive me and have me go with them."

As the eleventh (lunar) month arrived, on the fifth day of the waxing moon, she bathed and cleansed her body and dressed all in white. After eating about four or five spoonfuls of rice porridge, she went into meditation. Her heart went to heaven, abandoning the aggregates. When it came to the eighth day of the waxing moon, her remains were taken and cremated.

As for the father of Tan Chao Khun Upālī, he dressed all in white and went with the others to cremate her body. Upon returning, just after 9:00 p.m., he announced: "**Dear children and grandchildren, the old lady is gone. I'm going to follow her.**"

The children and grandchildren asked, "Where are you going?" He answered, "I'm going to the charnel ground – to die. I'm going tonight."

The children and grandchildren said: "No way. Are you kidding? Or are you just pulling a joke on us?"

The old man cautioned them: "I've never spoken to you like that."

As soon as morning light arose, the children and grandchildren went to go see. They found the old man seated in meditation posture, stuck to a cushion.

The eleventh month, on the fifth day – if we talk in the way of the world, we call it: "**Dying with one's heart going to heaven.**" The aggregates of the father of Tan Chao Khun Upālī died on the eighth day, but his heart went to heaven.

About this – **Tan Chao Khun Upālī** was the one who told me himself.

The mother of Khru Ajaan Mun practised the eight-fold virtue with **Tan Ajaan Mun Bhūridatta Thera**. Sitting, she would meditate; lying down, she would meditate. She stayed (in meditation) for three days and



three nights. **Tan Ajaan Mun Bhūridatta Thera** went into *jhāna* to help his mother have the power to be able to return.

Tan Ajaan Mun thus asked his mother about it. His mother replied that the **Lady Gotamī Bhikkhuṇī**, the **Lady Upalavaṇṇā Therī Bhikkhuṇī**, and the **Lady Yasodharā Bimbā Bhikkhuṇī** came to visit her, **and that twenty days from now, she would abandon the aggregates.**

Once it came to that time, on exactly the twentieth day, Tan Ajaan's mother really did abandon the aggregates as she said she would.

This is thus something that demonstrates that his mother had raised her heart into the happiness of peace – released from suffering in *saṃsāra*.

This story – **Tan Ajaan Mun Bhūridatta Thera** told me this himself as well.

In the Buddhist scriptures, there have been stories that have been told and preserved as a foundation. Thus in that way, let all of you scholars, skilled in Dhamma, skilled in the basis of practise, **raise up your own hearts** – each and every one of you – to make them **Buddho**, to make them **Dhammo** and **Saṅgho**.

When your hearts arrive at **Buddho**, the levels of the Pure Abodes arise from Saṅgho. In the end, consciousness ceases [meaning the end of defilement and clinging],⁴ and there is entry to Nibbāna.

I, myself, **Phra Ajaan Dteu**, offer the virtuous qualities of the Buddha, the virtuous qualities of the Dhamma, and the virtuous qualities of the Saṅgha as an act of veneration to the Buddha, an act of veneration to the Dhamma, and an act of veneration to the Saṅgha – to all the Buddhas, each and every one of them.

The Great Teacher, the perfectly enlightened Buddha – when he was about to extinguish his aggregates in *parinibbāna* – declared the five-fold virtue, declared the eight-fold virtue, declared the ten-fold virtue, declared the 227-fold virtue, declared the six levels of heaven, the sixteen

4. This comment is in the original Thai version.



Brahma realms, and the Triple Refuge to the male lay-disciples, female lay-disciples, and those with faith: both males and females, big and small, men and women.

People who are able to accept the five-fold virtue are relatives of the Buddha. If it's the case that we can't accept them, then we are just ordinary – we are still in the clan of unenlightened, common people.

If someone accepts the eight-fold virtue, they are close family to the Buddha. If it's the case that someone can't accept it, they continue to be ordinary.

If someone is able to accept the ten-fold virtue, they have to have a teacher, an ajaan. To ordain as a novice, one must have an ajaan. To ordain as a bhikkhu, one must have a preceptor and an announcing ajaan.

If we try to ordain all by ourselves, that is not possible. To try to disrobe all by one's self is not possible – one must abandon the state of training, taking leave from a teacher before one can thus disrobe, and correctly, according to what has been declared by the Buddha.

If one disrobes all on one's own, or ordains all on one's own, the Buddha said we will fare on as if companions of Devadatta – we will go to the great hell of *Avīci*; we won't take rebirth as a human being.

Being a human being like this is the best – anything we want, we can have. If we want to eat, there is something to eat. If we want to drink, there is something to drink. If we want to create goodness or create evil, we can.

If we have gone to the great hell of *Avīci*, there is no food and no water: we eat only fire – that is, the fires of lust, the fires of hatred and delusion, as our sustenance. When we eat flaming balls of fire, they burn us continuously – there is no point at which they go out. In the Pāli language, it is said: ***“kuppa-dhammo akuppa-dhammo”***⁵ – being born and then dying, dying and then being born like this in this mundane world. This – if you measure it in millions or hundreds of thousands of years, we

5. “A shakeable state, an unshakeable state” – these are among the possibilities of states that individuals experience and take on – included in a popular Abhidhamma chant in Thailand, the ‘7 Scriptures’ (*Jet Gambhee*).



still can't escape it.

In the scriptures of the Mahā-Paccarī,⁶ it has described how a female devatā came to admire the flowers of the Coral tree. She became so enamoured and absent-minded that she fell down and took birth as a human being in the country of the Isle of Lanka, as the daughter of the **wealthy Dhananchai**, a great millionaire.

When she grew up, she took a husband, as we humans do, and had five daughters and five sons. When they were adults, she and her children together built a new monastery and gave it the name '*Jetavanārāma*'. Her children and grandchildren were ordained there.

When she reached 100 years of age, her consciousness went to heaven – right to the Coral tree, and she went to the presiding devatā, who asked her, “Where did you go?” She replied, “I went to the Isle of Lanka. I went to the Isle of Lanka, and after reaching the age of 100 years, I came back up.”

100 human years is 1 hour in heaven.

1,000 human years is 10 hours in heaven.

Here, all of you skilled in Dhamma, our Great Teacher told it like this. He promulgated his dispensation to last 5000 years, but he taught and instructed human beings for 45 mundane human years, altogether.

When he had become the lord of the transcendent, having become an arahant and entering (final) Nibbāna – Nibbāna exists, it never deteriorates or disappears – the Buddha entered Nibbāna and is there in Nibbāna.

Phra Mogallāna, Phra Sāriputta, Phra Anuruddha and Phra Ānanda entered Nibbāna; they are there in Nibbāna.

All the bhikkhuṇīs who ordained by body, speech and mind – their hearts have become Nibbāna; they entered Nibbāna as well.

It is like **the moon**. The moon has no birth, no aging. The moon has no

6. The Mahā-Paccarī is one of the ancient commentaries that Buddhaghosa used and often quoted in compiling his commentaries on the scriptures.



affliction. The moon has no hot, no cold. **The stars** do not have birth, do not have death.

We **people** are confused and crazy – long-necked, white-eyed and long-tongued⁷... It's not the right way.

As for the **Dhamma, the words of teaching**, they arose out of the heart of the Lord Buddha; they arise out of the hearts of the arahants. Why do we thus not know it? Why do we thus not see it?

If we become arahants, or stream-enterers, or non-returners – whenever that is – that is when we will thus see and know the abiding place of the Buddha, the abiding place of the arahants.

When we are human, our eyes are human, our ears are human, our nose is human, our mouth is human, our body is human. The eyes are human – when they see money, we want the money; when they see gold, we want the gold; when they see jewels, we want the jewels; when they see rings, we want the rings; when they see our daughter, we love our daughter; when they see our grandchildren, we love our grandchildren... all the way through to great-grandchildren – there is no end to it.

We're human; we listen to the sounds of music, the sounds of singing, the sounds of the mouth reed-organ... The sounds of someone giving a Dhamma teaching – if we find that disagreeable, we are offending against our ancestry: the right ear and the left ear belong to our lower nature – easy to anger, quick to subside.

Buddho dwells with human beings. Dhammo and Saṅgho dwell with human beings. What can we do to thus not overlook this substance of humanity? If we keep looking past it, we will not experience the Buddho of humanity; we will not experience the Dhammo of humanity; we will not be able to experience the Saṅgho of humanity.



7. These are Thai idioms for ‘nosy and critical, cowardly, and babbling...’



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