

A Brief Introduction to the Vinaya School

律宗略說

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律宗全示戒學，注重規矩法則。行住坐臥四大威儀嚴整，身口意三業清淨。所謂優婆塞、優婆夷在家二眾五戒、八戒，菩薩十重四十八輕戒，沙彌、沙彌尼十戒，比丘二百五十條戒，比丘尼三百四十八條戒等；一一遵守勿犯，信受奉持。但念生死輪迴痛苦，一失人身，萬劫難復。時刻精修毘尼，慎毋放逸！

「律宗全示戒學」：律宗它全顯示戒學。「注重規矩法則」：它所注重的，所要緊的，就是規矩法則。人人都要守持規則，你若不守持規則，那就是沒有用的一個人；好像船破了，一定沉到大海裏去一樣。「行住坐臥四大威儀」：這四種大威儀，每一種有二百五十條，合起來就是一千條；現在一千，再加上過去一千，未來一千，這就是三千威儀。

「嚴整」：嚴，就是很嚴謹的；整，就是很整齊的，一點都不亂。身口意等，身不犯殺盜淫，口不犯綺語、妄言、兩舌、惡口，意不犯貪、瞋、癡，這三業清淨都沒有犯。

Essay:

The Vinaya School is devoted to revealing the study of *vinaya*, paying special attention to precepts and rules. It requires practitioners to be sternly disciplined and calm in all the four deportments: walking, standing, sitting, and lying down, as well as to be pure in all three aspects of karma: body, speech and mind. This includes the Five Precepts and the Eight Precepts held by the two-fold assembly of *upasakas* and *upasikas*, the Ten Major and Forty-eight Minor Precepts for Bodhisattvas, the Ten Sramanera Precepts, the Ten Sramanerika Precepts, the Two Hundred-fifty Precepts for Bhikshus, and the Three Hundred Forty-eight Precepts for Bhikshunis. All of these precepts are meant to be fully upheld and not to be transgressed – they should be well-received with faith and observed with reverence. One should always be mindful of the suffering on the turning wheel of birth and death. Once one loses the human body, it is difficult to regain it for millions of eons. Hence one should vigorously cultivate the *vinaya* at all times, without becoming lax or lazy.

Commentary:

The Vinaya School is devoted to revealing the study of *vinaya*. Paying special attention to precepts and rules is what this school emphasizes, deeming it of critical importance. Everyone needs to observe the precepts and rules. If you don't observe them, you are like a worthless person or like a leaky boat that sinks to the bottom of the ocean.

It requires practitioners to be sternly disciplined and calm in all the four deportments: sitting, standing, walking and lying down. Each of these four aspects has two hundred and fifty rules; combined, these add up to one thousand --one thousand for the present, one thousand for the past, and one more thousand for the future. These add up to three thousand rules regarding deportment.

In “yan zheng”, “yan” means serious and cautious; “zheng” means neat. Being neat means not being the least bit messy in the body, in speech, as well as in the

「所謂優婆塞、優婆夷」：這個戒所說的優婆塞、優婆夷，也就是在家近事男，在家近事女；這叫「在家二眾」。「五戒，八戒」：他們所受的有五戒，殺、盜、淫、妄、酒；八戒，就是八關齋戒。「菩薩十重四十八輕戒」：菩薩有十種重戒，四十八輕戒。

「沙彌、沙彌尼十戒」：沙彌、沙彌尼有十戒。沙彌是梵語，你們記得叫什麼？沙彌是男的，有驅鴉沙彌，就是趕鳥的；好像叢林裏的菜園子，鳥來吃菜，他把鳥趕走了。驅鴉沙彌就是年紀小的，有老一點的沙彌。沙彌尼就是女的。他們有十種戒律。「比丘二百五十條戒，比丘尼三百四十八條戒等」：比丘有二百五十條戒，比丘尼有三百四十八條戒等。比丘尼戒律多。

「一一遵守勿犯」：所有在每一條戒都守著，不要犯這個戒。

「信受奉持」：又信這個戒，戒體、戒法、戒相、戒行都要相信，不要生出一種懷疑心。「但念生死輪迴痛苦」：你為什麼要守戒？因為人的生死是一個很麻煩的事。在六道輪迴裏頭，今生是做人，來生是做鬼，再來生又做畜生，再來生又墮地獄。這個輪迴非常痛苦的，有的時候雖然升到天，沒有好久就墮落；或者做人，或者做阿修羅。所以說「一失人身，萬劫難復」，這個輪迴的痛苦，你把這個人身一丟了，一萬個劫再回復不了這個人身。所以這是最要緊的一件事！

「時刻精修毗尼」：得清涼果，調服身口意。「慎毋放逸」：你謹慎一點，千萬不要放肆啊！不要不守規矩。放肆，就是不守規矩。好像這個人又跳舞，又唱歌；誰叫他不要這樣亂來，他也不聽你的，這叫放肆。隨其所欲，想要幹什麼就幹什麼；他以為那是自由的，其實是錯的！

mind. The body refrains from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. In speech, one refrains from frivolous and meaningless speech, false speech, backbiting and harsh speech. The mind is free of greed, anger, and delusion. All these three aspects of karma are pure, without any transgression.

This includes the Five Precepts and the Eight Precepts held by the two-fold assembly of *upasakas* and *upasikas*. *Upasakas* and *upasikas* refer to the two-fold assembly of laity and also mean “men or women who serve the Triple Jewel”. The Five Precepts refer to the precepts of no killing, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no lying, and no taking intoxicants. The Eight Precepts refer to the Eight Precepts upheld on vegetarian fasting days. **The Ten Major and Forty-eight Minor Precepts for Bodhisattvas:** Within the Bodhisattva Precepts, there are ten major precepts and forty-eight minor precepts.

The Ten Sramanera Precepts and the Ten Sramanerika Precepts: There are ten precepts for *sramaneras*, as well as for *sramanerikas*. *Sramanera* is a Sanskrit word -- do you remember the different kinds of *sramaneras*? *Sramaneras* refer to male novice monks, while *Sramanerikas* refer to novice nuns. There is one type of *sramanera* called “scarecrow *sramanera*”. These *sramaneras* watch over the vegetables growing in the garden and scare the birds away. When birds come to eat the vegetables, they scare them away. Scarecrow *sramaneras* are young; there are also *sramaneras* who are older. Both *sramaneras* and *sramanerikas* have ten precepts. **The Two Hundred-fifty Precepts for Bhikshus, and the Three Hundred Forty-eight Precepts for Bhikshunis:** Bhikshunis have more precepts to follow.

All precepts are meant to be upheld and not to be transgressed: Each and every one of the precepts is to be followed, without being broken. **They should be well-received with faith and observed with reverence:** One needs to have faith in the precepts--in the precept substance, the precept dharmas, and the precept marks and the precept practice. One needs to have faith in all these and not give rise to doubt. **One should always be mindful of suffering on the turning wheel of birth and death:** Why do you want to follow the precepts? Because the cycle of birth and death is a very troublesome thing. When you revolve in the Six Destinies, in this life you may be a human, but in the next life you may become an animal, and still an animal in the next life. The next life you may fall into the hells. So, revolving on the wheel is a bitter and agonizing experience -- sometimes you ascend to the heavens, but before long you fall again and may become a human or an *asura*. Therefore, there is a saying: **Once one loses the human body, it is very difficult to regain it for millions of eons.** Once you are gone, you will be gone for over 10,000 eons before being able to regain your human form. Hence, this is the most important issue.

Hence one should vigorously cultivate the *vinaya* at all times, without becoming lax or lazy: One will attain the result of refreshing purity by regulating the body, speech, and mind. Behave with more care and caution. Take care not to indulge your desires or disregard the rules of conduct. For example, if you tell a person who is singing or dancing to not misbehave like that; he won't listen to you, but will let loose, instead, and do whatever he pleases, following his desires. He thinks that acting that way is freedom, but he is mistaken.