

# 妙法蓮華經淺釋

THE DHARMA FLOWER SUTRA WITH COMMENTARY

## 【分別功德品第十七】

ROLL FIVE, CHAPTER SEVENTEEN:  
DISCRIMINATION OF MERIT AND VIRTUE

宣化上人講 Commentary by the Venerable Master Hua  
國際譯經學院記錄翻譯  
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若有善男子、善女人，為阿耨多羅三藐三菩提故，於八十萬億那由他劫，行五波羅蜜：檀波羅蜜、尸羅波羅蜜、羼提波羅蜜、毘梨耶波羅蜜、禪波羅蜜，除般若波羅蜜，以是功德比前功德，百分、千分、百千萬億分不及其一，乃至算數譬喻所不能知。

「若有善男子、善女人，為阿耨多羅三藐三菩提故」：假設有持五戒、行十善的男人和女人，他們為求無上正等正覺的緣故，「於八十萬億那由他劫，行五波羅蜜」：在八十萬億那由他這麼多的劫之中，他們修行五種波羅蜜。波羅蜜，譯為「到彼岸」，就是由生死的此岸，經過煩惱的中流，而達到涅槃的彼岸。這五種波羅蜜都是什麼呢？

「檀波羅蜜」：就是「檀那波羅蜜」，他們修布施；檀那，是梵語，翻譯為「布施」。布施有三種：財施、法施、無畏施。財施有內財、外財。內財，就是你頭、目、腦、髓；外財，就是國、城、妻、子。你能布施你的財寶，這是財施；至於你的國家、你的房子、你的地，連你的妻子也能把她捨了，布施給其他的人，這都是施外財。你能布施你的頭、目、腦、髓，都能捨了它、都能布施，這都是施內財。法施，就是現在我們講經說

### Sutra:

“If a good man or a good woman, for the sake of *anuttara-samyaksambodhi*, were to practice the five *paramitas*—*dana paramita*, *silā paramita*, *ksanti paramita*, *virya paramita*, and *dhyana paramita*; all except *prajna paramita*—throughout eighty myriads of millions of *nayutas* of eons, the merit and virtue he or she would derive if compared with that of the previous person’s would not come to a hundredth part, nor to a thousandth, nor to a hundred thousand myriad millionth part, nor could it be known by resort to calculation or analogy.”

### Commentary:

Now here we are given an analogy for the measureless merit and virtue. **If a good man or a good woman**, who cultivates the five precepts and practices the ten good deeds, **were, throughout eighty myriads of millions of nayutas of eons, to practice the five paramitas...** *Paramita* is a Sanskrit word. It means “arrived at the other shore.” One goes from this shore of birth and death, through the massive current of afflictions, to the other shore, which is nirvana. What are the five *paramitas*? ***Dana paramita***. *Dana* means “giving.” There are three kinds of giving:

1. The Giving of Wealth
2. The Giving of Dharma
3. The Giving of Fearlessness

As to the Giving of Wealth, there is inner wealth and outer wealth. Inner wealth refers to one’s head, brains, bones, and marrow. Outer wealth refers to one’s country, cities, spouse, and children—all belongings and loved ones. You practice giving your country, possessions, house, land, and treasures; even your spouse can be given. An example of the Giving of

法，這是給你們的法施。無畏施，就是你有什麼恐懼不幸的事情，能幫助你沒有恐懼了。

「尸羅波羅蜜」：就是「持戒波羅蜜」，這是修持戒律的；尸羅，是梵語，翻譯為「戒律」。戒律在佛教裏邊，是很重要的，所以出家做比丘，必須要受戒；不受戒，就不能成比丘。所謂「眾生受佛戒，即入諸佛位；位同大覺已，真是諸佛子。」無論哪一類的眾生，你受佛戒，就有成佛的機會，就可以成佛，就到佛的地位上。那麼不受戒可不可以成佛呢？那是很困難的，機會是很少的；所以在佛教裏，特別重視戒律。終南山那個道宣律師，因為他持戒律持得太好了，感應天人來給他送飯。你受佛戒，地位就和這大覺世尊一樣了，這才是真正佛的弟子。

學佛法，必須要守持佛戒；守佛的戒律，就不可以隨隨便便的，願意怎麼樣就怎麼樣。守戒律，就是守規矩。這個戒律，在家人就有五戒；又可以受八戒——八關齋戒；又可以受「十重四十八輕戒」，這是菩薩戒。那麼出家，先受沙彌十戒，然後再受比丘二百五十條戒、比丘尼三百四十八條戒。

這戒律精嚴的人，天人都恭敬你；像道宣律師，就有天人給他送飯吃。你要是戒律精嚴的，那一切鬼神看見你，都會向你叩頭頂禮、恭敬你，所以持戒是很要緊的。戒，就是「止惡防非」。止惡，止住你一切的惡事不做，就是「諸惡不作」；防非，就是「眾善奉行」，你要做一切的善事、一切的好事。

我們受了戒之後，必須要守著那個戒、保持著那個戒，不要犯戒。你若破戒，那就好像在水上的浮囊破了，也就好像在海上的船漏了似的。船漏水了，就會沉到海底去；我們人要是受戒不守戒，也就會墮落到地獄、餓鬼、畜生去。這個戒律，若不是你自己想犯的，是有其他因緣而犯這個戒，那還可以有開緣。這戒講「開、遮、持、犯」。開，就是開開；遮，把它遮起來；持，受持戒；犯，犯戒。在這裏邊，又有「止持、作持」；若詳細講起來，也有很多的意思。

☞待續

Dharma is the present lectures being given on the Dharma. The Giving of Fearlessness takes place when one helps those who are afraid, by comforting them and making them feel secure.

*Sila paramita*: *Sila* means “precepts” and *sila paramita* means “holding precepts.” In Buddhism, the precepts are very important. In order to leave home to be a Bhikshu or a Bhikshuni, one must take the precepts. If one hasn’t taken the complete precepts, one cannot be called a Bhikshu or a Bhikshuni. It is said,

When living beings take the Buddha’s precepts,  
They enter the position of all the Buddhas.  
Their position is the same as the greatly Enlightened One.  
They may be called true disciples of the Buddha.

If one can receive the Buddha’s precepts, then no matter what kind of living being one is, one has a chance to become a Buddha. “If one doesn’t take the precepts, can one become a Buddha?” you ask. It’s very difficult. The chance of it happening is small. And so in Buddhism, great emphasis is placed on the precepts. On Zhongnan Mountain in China, the Vinaya Master Daoxuan held his precepts so purely that the gods were moved, and every day they brought him his one meal taken at noon. He was offered the food of the gods. That was a result of his strict morality.

Upon taking the Buddha’s precepts, one gains the same position as the Buddha and may be called a real disciple of the Buddha. Now to study the Buddhadharma, one must take and keep the Buddha’s precepts. Those who keep the precepts can’t be lax and just do whatever they feel like doing. Keeping the precepts just means following the rules. The laypeople have the Five Precepts. They can also take the Eight Precepts or the Ten Major and Forty-eight Minor Precepts. Those who have left home take the Ten Shramanera Precepts, the 250 Bhikshu Precepts, or the 348 Bhikshuni Precepts.

The gods will revere a person who is pure in keeping the precepts. That’s why the gods brought food to Vinaya Master Daoxuan. If you are strict about keeping the precepts, all the ghosts and spirits will bow and pay respect when they see you. Therefore, it’s very important to keep the precepts. Precepts are just for the purpose of “stopping evil and preventing transgression.” They insure that one does no evil but does all manner of good deeds.

Once one has taken the precepts, however, one must keep the precepts. You must not break the precepts. If you break the precepts, it’s as if you have sprung a leak in your life raft—you are headed for the bottom of the sea. If you take the precepts but fail to keep them, you will fall into the three evil paths—hells, animals, hungry ghosts. If you do not intend to break the precepts, but some other cause or condition causes you to do so unintentionally, then it’s excusable. Precepts are talked about in terms of exceptions, rules, maintenance, and violation. There are many fine points to the precepts, which everyone should look into in detail.

☞To be continued