

# 淺談三皈依

## A Simple Explanation of the Three Refuges

比丘近湛法師2023年1月24日講於馬來西亞法界觀音聖寺

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A Dharma Talk by Bhikshu Jin Zhan at the Dharma Realm Guanyin Sagely Monastery in Malaysia on Jan 24, 2023

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諸佛菩薩、上人、各位法師、各位善知識：阿彌陀佛！

這是近湛第一次來到貴寶地，到這個莊嚴的登彼岸。（編按：「法界觀音聖寺」它的前身稱為「觀音堂」，已經有一百二十五年的歷史。）大家能夠在新春期間參加這個拜懺的法會，非常難得。

今天法會結束，有三皈依的儀式。所以在此要跟大家談談三皈五戒的意義。我們從「三皈依」開始談，「三」就是佛、法、僧。「皈依」的「皈」字，就是一個「反」字和一個「白」字的合成，意思是反黑歸白——皈依，就是令我們從染污返回到原本的自性清淨。

All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, the Venerable Master, all Dharma Masters, and all good knowing advisors: Amitabha!

This is the first time Jin Zhan has come to your place, to this magnificent monastery— Dharma Realm Guanyin Sagely Monastery. (Editor's note: "Dharma Realm Guanyin Sagely Monastery" was previously known as "Kun Yam Thong/Guanyin Hall" with a history of 125 years.) It's very rare that everyone here can participate in this bowing session during the lunar new year.

Today when the Dharma assembly is over, there will be a ceremony of the Three Refuges. So here I want to talk to you about the meaning of the Three Refuges and Five Precepts. Let's start with the "Three Refuges." The "three" are the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. The Chinese character of "refuge" is a combination of the word "reverse" and the word "white," which means turning black into white—taking refuge is to return us from defilement to the original pure self-nature.

"Refuge" also means "return life and bow in respect," which means returning our body, mind, and life to the Triple Jewel of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The Chinese word "Buddha" is actually translated from the

「皈依」還有「皈命敬投」的意思，就是把我們的身心性命都返回到佛、法、僧三寶。

「佛」這個中文字其實是從印度話「佛陀耶」翻譯過來的，翻譯成中文的意思，簡單來講，是「智者」與「覺者」。「智」就是有智慧的人；「覺」就是覺悟的人。

佛的智慧，用人間的話是很難來解釋的。那麼，我們可以簡單的把「智者」這個「智」分成三個部分：一、一切智；二、道種智；三、一切種智。你證得「一切智」，就是所謂的阿羅漢；你證得「道種智」，就是所謂的菩薩；你證得「一切種智」，就是所謂的佛。

這些雖然是一些佛教的名詞，我們可以不必知道這麼詳細。可是我們現在想要講的，從這裡來了解一下，佛是多麼稀有難得的。

我們想要證到阿羅漢，就要斷掉所謂的「見惑」和「思惑」。依上人的解釋，「見惑」就是對境起貪愛。什麼叫「對境起貪愛」？比如說我們用齋的時候，看到那麼多好吃的東西，就會特別每一個都想要吃，每一個都想要嚐。當然不只是吃的，我們眼睛所見的、耳朵所聽的等等，這些只要我們心想要得到、想要去試一試，那就是「對境起貪愛」。

如果我們斷了所謂的見惑，是不是就證到阿羅漢果了？還沒有！斷見惑只是證到初果。但是要斷掉這個見惑，對我們來說都是非常非常困難的。你就可以知道要證得阿羅漢果是多麼不容易。

證得阿羅漢果，有很多很多的好處；其中最大的一個好處，對我們來說就是能「出三界」。三界就是欲界、色界、無色界。出了三界，就不會在三界受生死。我們知道，人都有生老病死，並且一切的動物、一切的植物等等也都有生老病死。你能證到阿羅漢果了，你就不需要再來三界中受生，就不會在這個三界裡面生死，就是離開了這個六道輪迴。

佛並不只是阿羅漢而已，佛是斷掉了所

Sanskrit word “Buddhaya.” When translated into Chinese, it means “wise (zhi) one” and “enlightened (jue) one”. “Zhi” means a person with wisdom; “jue” means a person who is enlightened.

It is difficult to explain the wisdom of Buddha in words. Then, we can simply divide the “wisdom” of “wise man” into three parts: First, “All Wisdom” (sarva-jñāna); you are an Arhat who has attained “All Wisdom.” Second, Wisdom in the Way (mārgajñāna); you are a Bodhisattva once you have realized the “Wisdom in the Way.” Third, Wisdom regarding all aspects of things (sarvathājñāna); one attains Buddhahood when realizing this wisdom.

These are Buddhist terms, we don't need to go into details; but what we want to talk about now is to understand how rare Buddhas are.

If we want to become an Arhat, we must sever the so-called “delusions of views” and “delusions of thoughts.” According to the Venerable Master's explanation, “delusions of views” refers to experiencing craving for the states we encounter. What is “craving for the states we encounter”? For example, when we have a meal, upon seeing so many delicious dishes, we will want to eat every one of them, and want to taste every one of them. Of course, it's not just about food, what we see with our eyes, what we hear with our ears...as long as we want to get it and try it, that is “craving for the states we encounter.”

If we cut off the so-called delusions of views, will we attain Arhatship? Not yet! Severing the delusions of views is just to attain the first fruition of Arhatship. However, it is very, very difficult for us to sever delusions of views. Then you can know how difficult it is to attain Arhatship.

There are many, many benefits of attaining Arhatship; one of the biggest benefits for us is that we can “leave the three realms.” The three realms are the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm. If we can leave the Three Realms, we will put an end to the cycle of birth and death in the Three Realms. We know that human beings are subject to birth, aging, illness and death, and all animals, plants, and beings are also subject to birth, aging, illness and death. Once you have attained Arhatship, you don't need to be reborn in the Three Realms, you won't live and die in the Three Realms, you just leave the cycle of saṃsāra (transmigration in the six paths).

調的見惑和思惑，還斷了菩薩的塵沙惑，甚至還斷了無明惑。因為佛是一個覺者，覺悟一切的眾生，所以我們要皈依佛。

然後我們要皈依法，佛講這麼多的法，是為了要度所有一切的眾生——不是只度當時佛住世的人，還有度現在的我們，或者甚至度將來的眾生。只要佛法還在世間，眾生就可以得度。所以我們要依據佛法去修行。其實依據佛法修行並不是這麼容易的，我們還要看一些祖師大德對佛法的解釋，好像上人對各經典都有很多的淺釋，大家都可以儘量去參考。

有人說：「法雖然是佛說的，可是現在佛已經不住世了，這個法是不是我們隨隨便便就可以這樣子修行，然後也沒有一個依據、依止？」佛說這樣是不可以的，所以佛就建立了僧團制度，僧團最主要就是把正確的佛法傳下來。

僧團是非常重要的，因為僧團能夠將正確的佛法教導給人們。因此我們需要皈依僧團，所謂的「三皈依」就是皈依佛、皈依法、皈依僧。

我們在作三皈依的時候，也要知道這其實是皈依到我們的自性——自性裡面的佛，自性裡面的法，自性裡面的僧。所謂的皈依，是皈依到自性的三寶。

自性的三寶是什麼？在《六祖法寶壇經》裡，六祖大師解釋得蠻清楚的：三皈依戒就是皈依自性的覺，皈依自性的正，皈依自性的淨。皈依自性的「覺」，就是要皈依到我們自己本身的覺性；然後皈依自性的「正」，就是要皈依到我們自己的正知正見，這個正知正見就是要由佛法的支持；然後皈依自性的「淨」，淨是清淨，清淨其實就到代表僧人、僧團，因為僧團就是清淨的。❀

The Buddha is not just an Arhat. The Buddha cuts off the delusions of views and thoughts, as well as delusions as numerous as (atomic) particles and (Ganges) sands that Bodhisattvas still have. And there is even the delusions of ignorance. Because the Buddha is an enlightened one who enlightens all sentient beings, so we should take refuge in the Buddha.

Then we need to take refuge in the Dharma. The Buddha taught so many Dharmas in order to save all sentient beings—not only those who lived in the world at that time, but also us now, or even sentient beings in the future. As long as the Buddhadharma is still in the world, sentient beings can be saved. So we have to practice according to the Dharma. In fact, it is not so easy to practice according to the Dharma. We still need to read the commentaries of the Dharma by patriarchs and greatly virtuous ones. For instance, the Venerable Master made a lot of commentaries for various sutras. Everyone can refer to them as much as possible.

Some people say, “Although the Dharma was taught by the Buddha, the Buddha is no longer in this world. Does this mean that we can practice this Dharma casually without any basis or reliance (pratisaranāni)?” The Buddha said that this is not allowed. Therefore, the Buddha established the Sangha system, and the most important thing for the Sangha is to pass down the proper Buddhist teachings.

The Sangha is very important because the Sangha can teach the proper Dharma to people. Therefore, we need to take refuge in the Sangha. The so-called “three refuges” refers to taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

When we take the Three Refuges, we also need to know that this is actually taking refuge in our inherent nature—the Buddha in our inherent nature, the Dharma in our inherent nature, and the Sangha in our inherent nature. The so-called “refuge” refers to taking refuge in the Triple Jewel of the inherent nature.

What is the triple jewel of the inherent nature? In the *Sixth Patriarch's Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra*, the Sixth Patriarch explained quite clearly: the unconditioned precepts of the Three Refuges are to take refuge in the awakened inherent nature, the genuine and true inherent nature, and the pure inherent nature. To take refuge in the awakened inherent nature is to take refuge in our own awareness; and then to take refuge in the genuine and true inherent nature is to take refuge in our proper knowledge and proper views, which must rely on the Buddhadharma; and then take refuge in the pure inherent nature. Purity actually represents monastics and the Sangha, because the Sangha is pure. ❀