

佛學問答

Questions on Buddhism

解答者：李炳南居士

Answered by Mr. P. N. Li

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Translated by Mr. H. Y. Li

Q. The monks depend on alms for their livings therefore they are dependente and lose their elevateness before the eyes of unbelievers. Why they don't change their livings by self producing and not depend on others?

A. That is the custom decended from the day of Sakya Buddha who made the commandments to standardize the type of livings of monks. They are forbidden to trading because they should concentrate their minds on the way of deliverance and not on money. It it just like the officials and scholars who do not perform any trading and only concentrate their minds for the managements and studies. If they are also working trading, they will not perform their functions well. Monks are teachers of Buddhism and those are their professions. They should earn their food by being good monks just as professors should earn their salaries. No one will blame professors for their not being trading to earn their money. Nowadays some ones don't realize the importance of the monks, the teachers of Dharma.

Q. When I repeat the name of Amitabha I feel solitude. Is it a proper phenominon?

A. That is from your eager believing but you should not let it develop too much.

Q. We are told by the Amita Sutra that there are three thousand "great thousand worlds". No one believe in it before the development of the science. But now we know that there are many worlds in the stars and it just conforms to the teachings of Buddha. Is the Western Pure Land a star world?

A. The Western Pure Land is similar to our own earth and it may be a star world.

Q. The iron curtain dropped on the Chinese continent and many monks were killed by communists. By the cause and effect law why the good monks got a bad ending? Are the results based on their cause of the former life?

A. You are right. But there are also Bodhisattvas not by bad cause of former the life but by their kind will they enter hell to save the beings like Bodhisattva Ktisigarbha. The Bodhisattva Avaloketesvara entered every world and life to save the beings. Those monks died inside the iron curtain may be Bodhisattvas.

Q. Before I was a Buddhist I like very much the sound of the bells in the temples. But after I was a Buddhist I can never remember any Buddhist teachings. How shall I do to improve my memory?

A. Formerly Mr. K. Kuei said, "Mr. Y. C. Chen, a Cantonese, cannot read. He saluted the books twice a day and suddenly he can read them." "Ven. Yinkuang said," You should find Dharma from reverance. If you have ten percent reverance you cancel out ten percent sin and increase ten percent fortune; if you have hundred percent reverance you cancel out hundred percent sin and increase hundred percent fortune." You can take reference on these.

Q. There were many insects flying under the lamp and soon died. How to stop it?

A. By Buddhist custom all lamps should be screened or curtained to prevent the insects to touch with the heat. Please do the same.

Q. Gandharva, Garuda, Kinnara, Mahoraga, are the above of what kind of birth? How are their forms and mystic powers?

A. Gandharva is a spirit on Gandhamadana, the fragrant or incense mountains, so called because the Gandharvas do not drink wine or eat meat, but feed on incense or fragrance and give off fragrant odours. Garuda is a mythical bird, the chief of the feathered race, translated a goldenwinged. It feeds on

snakes and dragons. Kinnara is the musicians of kuvera with men's bodies and horses' heads; they are described as men yet not men, and mythical beings. Mahoraga is described as large bellied; a class of demons shaped like the boa. The Gandharva and Kinnara are born by transformation and the Garuda and Mahoraga are born by eggs.

佛 教 新 聞

Buddhist News in Free China

Translated by Mr. H. Y. Li

Upasaka Tang Acted as Free Medical Doctor

Taipei—Upasaka Tang, one of our writers, opened his medical service free of charge. He knew both the art of curing mental disease and physical disease. He was a graduate of Chinese Medical Academy.

Ven. Wenchu Came with the Union College. Mr. and Mrs. Chu Met her at the Wharf.

Keelung—Ven. Wenchu, a Bhikshuni writer learning in the Honkong Union College, came to Taiwan with the tourist party of the college. Mr. and Mrs. F. Chu met her at keelung wharf. The Venerable is a Cantonese began her homeless life at the age of sixteen. She graduated from the Chenghsin Buddhist College of Hongkong and now is a student of philosophy of the Hongkong Union College. She is now on her age of twenty-seven and was a productive Buddhist writer.

Taichung Buddhist Labrary Changed its Name into Chihkuang

Taichung—The Taichung Buddhist Labrary, established by Mr. P. N. Li, got the permission from the government and changed its name into Chih-kuang Labrary. There are six sets of the Tripitaka (the Buddhist canon) and several thousands of Buddhist books. They welcome any gift of Buddhist books. The address is No. 15 Lihsing North Road, Central District, Taichung, Taiwan, Free China.

Pumen Chapter Explained at the Lotus Club of Taichung.

Taichung—There are Dharma speeches on every Saturday at the Lotus Club of Taichung given by the students of Mr. P. N. Li. Now Miss C. L. Lu is explaining the Pumen chapter in local dialect and is interpreted into national language by Miss S. C. Wei.

The "Taday Buddhism Pictorial" Publishers Preaching Dharma Around the Island

Fengshan—The "Today Buddhism Pictorial" Publishers organized a preaching party and set out around the island. The members are Ven. Chuyuen, Mr. K. Chang, Miss Saphia S. Yang and Miss C. Y. Yang.

Announcement

The Bodhedrum want to chaim that their financial condition is not good now. To compensatē the foreign postage please begin your subscription. The subscription fee for one year is U. S. \$ 2.00 or Hong kong \$ 12.00. Please send to Mr. F. Chu by registered letter or cash inside mail.

佛 學 論 文

TOPICS ON BUDDHISM THE "OTHER POWER" BUDDHISM

By Venerable Sumangalo

It has been said that words were invented to conceal thoughts. Often it seems that words are incapable of pevealing the nature of thoughts on the higher levels. Many a heated word-battle has taken place over points which ultimately reveal themselves as being terminological in nature rather than conceptual. Then too, mankind has always shown a most remarkable readiness to swallow camels without so much as a slight gagging, but gnat-swallowing almost invariably entails much straining and is often declared to be a manifest impossibility. Between the Eastern and Western Churches of Christianity