

왜 불교인가?

동영상 법문: Why Buddhism?, <https://youtu.be/AVKF5SPHveo>

(2021-09-12, Ven. Battaramulle Amadassana Thero)

00:00

Hello, and welcome to Jethavanarama Buddhist Monastery!

Today, we bring to you the first episode of a brand new series of talks. The purpose behind these talks is to introduce to you some of the choices that i have made in my life, buddhist philosophy and how it has impacted me.

For the duration of this talk, i'm going to assume that most of you will be new to these talks, will be new to our channel, will be new to buddhism, buddhist philosophy, and the buddhist way of life.

01:06

For those of you who are (are) regulars, of course, you know where to find us and you will be fully aware of the numerous other talks that are available on our channel. Most of you who have joined us today to watch this, and to listen to us.

We'll have lots of questions. You'll be curious, perhaps you may have some assumptions already about what buddhism is, about who i am. But most of you, i assume, will be looking for some assurances, because although you may have picked up bits and pieces along the way. And you may have read on forums, listened to various other talks, been to seminars or read in books about what buddhism is.

02:20

Most of you may be not fully aware of what it is, and you will naturally have all sorts of questions; for instance, you may be curious already as to what it is i'm holding in my hands and the decoration that surrounds me.

Why are there (why are there) flowers on my right hand side? Why am i bold-headed? Why am i in a robe? A lot of questions.

During this or throughout these sermons, i will try to provide answers to at least some of them, and the reason i say that is because the main purpose of these talks, and i prefer to call them talks rather than sermons.

03:20

The main purpose of these talks will not be so much as to explain to you some of the customs, rituals, practices, and observances of the buddhist religion, but rather to introduce to you buddhist philosophy, the buddhist way of thinking.

What it is that differentiates buddhist way of thinking to various other philosophies and ideologies? It is that (that) got me interested personally, and i feel and believe that most of you will benefit from learning more about that than most of the other things that surround and are associated with any religion for that matter.

04:27

Over a number of talks we will attempt to introduce to you the basic fundamentals of buddhist philosophy, and in these talks there are probably one or two things that i will adhere to. That will be customary, for instance, i will start the talk by paying homage to the lord buddha, and at the end of this talk we will conclude by transferring merits. The meaning of these activities, i will share with you as we go along. Most of the other observances that are customary at the beginning and end of dhamma talks, we have omitted for the sake of brevity, and of course as some of them may be very new to you, and perhaps might not be of all that interest.

05:42

But rather, the main purpose of these talks will be aimed at sharing with you, what it is that i have learned in my life about buddhist philosophy, and how it can help us all achieve something that we are all looking for.

So, before i continue i will now take a moment to pay homage to the lord buddha, and we will continue with the same.

Namō tassa, bhagavatō, arahatō, sammā sambuddhassa.

Namō tassa, bhagavatō, arahatō, sammā sambuddhassa.

Namō tassa, bhagavatō, arahatō, sammā sambuddhassa.

07:02

So, what is the buddhism? Most of you will know it as a religion among the many religions that we have. Buddhism is quite popular; it is well known throughout the

world, and most of you will also know that the founder of buddhism is the Gotama Buddha who lived among us two and a half thousand years ago.

At eighty years of age he passed away, and over a period of 45 years he roamed the earth sharing with humanity what he discovered, and this is today what we have accepted and what we learn and study as buddhist philosophy.

08:18

Now, of course, over the years as with anything, things can change, and things may have changed. However, there are scriptures which are available to us, which we study, and also when we learn and practice buddhist philosophy things seem to become obvious.

And personally for me at least, this is my ideal way of working out. What i believe is the buddhist philosophy that works for me. And some of the other practices, virtues, observances which may be customary, but maybe not so much things that i personally have all that interest in myself.

09:45

So what is buddhist philosophy, and why buddhist philosophy? Let me put it this way. I believe that all of us, all human beings, all men women and children go through life looking for one thing in common.

We seem to be going about it doing all sorts of different things. However, we're all after one purpose right from when you wake up in the morning to all the things that you do throughout the day and as you finish at the end of the day.

If you take into account all the things that you have done and ask yourself one question "why did i do them?", "what did i expect as an outcome from all of these activities", i believe you'll agree with me that they have one thing in common, and that all of these things were done to achieve fulfillment, happiness, satisfaction, to make, to achieve that feeling that you have lived the day to your fullest, and that life throughout the day that you have lived it has been fulfilling.

11:28

So, really we go through life looking for happiness. I doubt that is anything in life that anyone does. And i feel and i agree, i believe you will agree with me that anyone does to achieve anything other than happiness.

It may be that there are some things that you do to fulfill your duties, responsibilities, and even they give you a sense of satisfaction that you have fulfilled your duties and responsibilities.

But the vast majority of things that we do in our lives are to achieve happiness for ourselves whether it is the places that we go to, the food that we eat, the things that we do, we sing, we dance.

12:30

We spend time with our families and friends, we visit places, we go sightseeing, we go on holiday, we engage ourselves in various activities, we work, and we play, we earn money, we build homes, we buy cars, we fly rockets, we explore, we go on adventures, we try out different things.

Of course, the list goes on and on, numerous things we do as a race or human race, and numerous things we pick up along the way.

13:31

It would be fair to say that we do far more things today in terms of variety than perhaps we used to a few thousand years ago. So, as humanity evolves, as the human species evolves, what we realize is that people try out different things and they keep trying out various different things.

But, if you were to ask the question “what is the one thing that people look for in all these ventures in every new enterprise?”, the answer always is the same. And that is everything we do.

We do because we look for fulfillment in life, something that makes us feel that we have achieved something, something that satisfies us, something that makes us happy.

14:42

And i believe that the reason that we are interested in religion whether that is buddhism, islam, christianity, hinduism, or any other religion for that matter is because we seek fulfillment, satisfaction, and happiness by our adherence to the teachings in those religions.

And ~ we feel that we have achieved something in our lives by being part of something greater than us.

So, why buddhism? I would say to put it quite simply for the very reason why you do anything else, the very reason why you do anything and everything else.

15:48

If you do it intently or intentionally, you must do it because it makes you happy, it satisfies you, it helps you achieve fulfillment.

So why buddhism? I'd say is for the same reason. There are buddhists who are not all that interested in buddhism, and that may be because they don't believe that it helps them to achieve a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction, and that may be because they don't fully understand what buddhism offers them.

So, our intention, our purpose with these talks is to introduce to you buddhist philosophy rather than buddhism as a religion, but buddhist philosophy to make available to you options.

16:57

It's always nice to have options ~. Whenever we want to do something, it's always good to have options. Whether that is going to a restaurant, you like to have some options.

If it's a question of what you'd like to be, doing this weekend, well, you'd always like to have some options. Because options give us the feeling that we are in control, we have choice, and making the right choice to help us achieve fulfillment and satisfaction. That is something that matters a lot to us.

So, what i don't intend through this talks is to idealize buddhism, to make you feel that this is something that you have to do, to make you feel that there are strict practices that you have to observe and adhere to.

18:07

Quite the contrary is the truth. Buddhism is about liberation, is about giving you the choice to do whatever you like. But it is about explaining to you the consequences of those choices, and then ~ leaving you rather free will to decide what you'd like to do. Some of the preconceptions that people may have about buddhism is that "if you practice buddhism then there are lots of things that you have to do, like for instance, become a vegetarian, or perhaps offer flowers to a statue, or maybe go to the temple, worship, or maybe change the way you dress."

19:15

Now these things are customary, they're not mandatory. And that is why my intention is to leave out as much of those things as possible, and to try and focus on what buddhist philosophy is. So that you are able to listen, think for yourself, analyze your options, and then from there on it's up to you whatever you decide to do.

I am a monk. Most of you will be familiar with what you see on screen. Today, this is a life that i have chosen to live; no one has forced me to become a monk; no one has forced me to dress the way i do in a robe; no one has forced me to shave my head.

20:14

These are all conscious choices, choices that i have made for the same reason, that i have decided to understand and live buddhist philosophy. It is the same reason why, as i said earlier, we do anything and everything in life for the purpose of happiness.

Eventually i'll help make sense of all these things to you. So the only thing that i ask of you is to continue to remain with us, and remain curious, and of course also open-minded.

At no point will i ask you to believe in something that you cannot believe without giving you evidence to the same.

21:17

I will not ask you to engage in various rituals, or activities, or practices. Don't worry i will not ask you to shave your heads. I will not ask you to become a monk, or even come and visit us to the monastery.

All of that is up to you; that is your choice; this is all about choices; this is all about freedom, freedom of choice.

I believe that every man, woman, and child, every human being has a duty unto themselves to learn about all of the options that are available to them as they go through life, and to achieve happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment.

It is a duty that we all have to ourselves, so that when we have lived and gone through life, we can look back at our lives and say "that was a life well lived, a full life".

22:28

It would be a real shame don't you think, that at the end of our lives if we were to look back, and then feel that perhaps there was just one more thing that i could have done. (one most tone that i could have turned and i could have been happier.)

I wouldn't want that for any of you, as i didn't want that for myself either. I have been a monk for just over four years, and before that i lived a lay life like most of you.

And in my lay life, also the one thing that i wanted was happiness, and to achieve that i have done almost everything, almost all of the things that i mentioned above(about) the things that people do to be happy: going places, earning money, doing a good job, having a family, trying out different things, adventure, all sorts.

23:53

And then, when i was introduced to buddhist philosophy, i realized this is what i have been missing all my life, and so i made a conscious choice to learn more, to study more about buddhist philosophy. And then, eventually one fine day, i decided that this is what i want to do for the rest of my life. And so, here we are.

That day may or may not come for you, and as i said earlier, it is not my intention to force you down any pathway in life. I have no intention of doing that whatsoever. All i have intended to do as part of these talks is to make you aware of options, choices.

Because something that i do know and i'm sure you'll agree with me is, as i've said earlier, all things that we do in life, we do with one purpose, and that one purpose is to achieve happiness.

25:07

So, why buddhism is for that reason. ~ Why should you listen to these talks? It is for that reason; it is for the same reason that if a new restaurant were to open in the town, you'd probably go and try it out. Because you want to see what other options you have.

If a new fashion store were to open in town, you'd probably go and at least window shop to see what they have to offer. Most weekends you'll probably be looking for an opportunity for an escape to go somewhere, somewhere nice, somewhere interesting, perhaps to go on holiday, and then you go on a website and find out

some of the good places, some places that you can go on holiday: All for the purpose of achieving happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment.

26:23

~ So, trying out something new for the purpose of achieving fulfillment and satisfaction is nothing new to you. It is something we all do regularly on it and almost on a daily basis. If ever there is something new, we always try and see if that is something that will make us happier than we already are.

And so, therefore, for the same reason i would like to introduce to you buddhist philosophy as i believe, that this is a really strong option, that you should all be aware of, every human being should be aware of.

As they make their choices as to what makes them happy, so that is why buddhist philosophy, and that is why these talks.

So what is buddhist philosophy then? Most of you, when you think about buddhism and also think back to some of the things you already know about buddhism, will i'm sure have heard that buddhism deals a great amount with suffering.

27:48

Doesn't the buddha talk about suffering? Some people even think that all he's talked about is suffering, and nothing else.

So it may be that some people are prejudiced in their decisions, in their choices. And they don't feel ~; they feel reluctant to even consider or listen to a buddhist talk from thereon, because they feel that "if it is happiness that i seek in my life, why should i listen to a principle / a set of principles or even a philosophy that deals wholly with suffering?" And that's a very valid question.

You see the buddha did talk about suffering; he did, but what's really interesting is what he talked about immediately afterwards; he talked about suffering, he then went on to talk about the cause of suffering; he then said if you eradicate the cause of suffering then suffering will be permanently eradicated, and then he showed us the path to eradicating the cause of suffering.

29:23

So it is not like he said 'it's all suffering, it's all doom and gloom', quite the opposite.

He talked about suffering, and then he talked about how we can work to end suffering. So, for someone to believe that buddhism is all about suffering, i'm not sure that is true, because that is only one quarter of it.

What's really interesting is what he talked about suffering and how he explained to us that suffering can be brought to an end.

It may be that most people are not aware of that, and that's okay, because that is what these talks are for.

30:18

Now, if we are interested in happiness, should we also be interested in philosophy that talks about suffering? Surely they're the opposite of each other. Well, as much as we'd like to be happy, there are of course things in life that make us unhappy, aren't there?

Things that steal our happiness, the normal vicissitudes of life, as we go through life it has its ups and downs, and i think it would be unfair to say that all we experience in life is happiness. Both you and i know fully well that in life we have to face both happiness and unhappiness. There are things that make us happy, and there are things that make us unhappy.

31:20

What if you could completely get rid of the things that make you unhappy, or rather, what if unhappiness can be completely removed from your life? Wouldn't that be ideal?

Let's not jump in too soon into conclusions as to whether it is possible or not. But hypothetically if that were possible, and if that was an option, would you not consider it? What if there was nothing in this world that could make you unhappy? Think about this.

Right now i'm sure you'll agree that there are lots of things that can make you unhappy. So, for instance, think about all the things that make you happy, your family, your children, your work, your status, and even material things like food.

32:33

If you like going to the movies, games, playing sport, trying out different things, adventure, these are things that make you happy, these are things that make most people happy.

And even things like love, emotions, feeling cared for are things that make you happy. Well, that's all good and well. But just as much as they make you happy, they also have the potential to make you unhappy, don't they? Because, you see anything that makes you happy, if and when taken away from you usually forcibly, so against your will, now what does that do to you?

33:39

Well then it makes you unhappy, and that would be true for all of the examples that I mentioned earlier. Anything that makes you happy, if and when taken away from you against your will, that makes you unhappy.

Then there are other things that make you unhappy as a given, and therefore you keep away from them as much as you possibly can, things that you try and avoid, so just as much as you like to be among friends, you like to be away from those people who you consider not so friendly.

34:33

Those people who you don't like very much, there may be some items of food that you don't like to eat. Eating them, their taste, or even their smell might make you unhappy.

There'll be some things that you don't like to do, for instance, homework for young people. These are things that make you unhappy. So, therefore what people try and do is avoid them as best they can, but does it always work?

Your efforts to try and avoid them, does that always work? Well you know the answer. As much as you try to keep them at bay, from time to time life has a way of bringing these things back to you.

35:33

People that you don't like, you just keep bumping into them. Things that you don't like, you just happen to do them, you just happen to have to do them from time to time, and you just can't avoid them.

Places where you don't want to be, sometimes you just have to be; things you don't want to do, sometimes you just have to do; things you don't want to see, sometimes you just have to see; things you don't want to listen to, things you don't want to hear, sometimes you just have to hear them.

So, as much as you try and avoid them, these things are not always in your control.

36:23

So you see when you don't have everything under your control, things that you like can be taken away from you, and things that you don't like can be brought to you, and that can take away your happiness.

Loved ones pass away. that is inevitable. Think for a moment about the people you live with today, your family; this could be your mother, your father, your children, your husband or wife, your siblings, your friends.

37:22

You know for a fact that eventually they're going to say goodbye for good one by one, either they're all gonna say goodbye one by one, or you're gonna say goodbye to them all at once.

One of these two things will inevitably happen, and even if one may argue well if i am the first to go then, that grief is only short-lived. What if the other happens, as in you hang around, but other people, your loved ones in your life, they pass away from time to time?

Well then, you can't stop, you can't help yourself from feeling unhappy, from feeling sad and disappointed.

38:24

So you see as much as you try to live a life fulfilled, to live a life of happiness and contentment, there are always things that come and take that away from you. And of course we always try to make our minds up to be strong in these times, in difficult times to be courageous.

The fact that you have to be like that, i see, is a problem; the fact that you have to make your mind up to be happy, the fact that you have to strive to be courageous in the face of these institutes, i see, is a problem.

Because it would be ideal wouldn't it that if you didn't have to be like that, that if nothing could take away your happiness, and ~ you could be happy regardless of what happens around you.

39:28

Now, assuming you all agree with me on that point, and i see no reason why anyone should disagree. Is there anything that you have available to yourself, any philosophy, or anything material, any belief system that has, thus far, enabled you to achieve that level of contentment?

What level of contentment? "A contentment that cannot be taken away from you, a fulfillment that cannot be taken away from you, a happiness that cannot be taken away from you."

(Think about) Think for a moment about all the things that you have done throughout your life up until this point.

40:23

You may have had a good education. You may be in a good job that pays you good money ~ and provides you with quite a lot of perks. It may be that you live the ideal life, a wonderful life you have a good wife or a good husband, a wonderful family, and do the things that you enjoy doing regularly, you also believe in some form of religion maybe.

~ My question to you is "Have you, thus far, found anything that has enabled you to achieve a happiness that cannot be taken away from you, anything or anyone? Is there anything or anyone in your life, that you have come across in your life, that has given you a happiness that can not be taken away from you, and unbreakable happiness?

41:50

Take a moment to think about this; mentally go through what you have available to you, your money, all your richness, all your riches, ~ everyone you have around you, friends and family, and the belief systems that you hold on to, philosophies, principles, theories, ideologies, religions that you have faith in.

Put all them together, do you have available to you anything that in this lifetime can completely heal you of all unhappiness? meaning no matter what happens to you, no

matter what happens around you, no matter what happens to the things, and the people that you care about, that you love, you can still remain happy.

43:05

Now we are unfortunate to be in a time of the global pandemic that has affected the lives of pretty much everyone alive. Every day, reports come in of people passing away and the numbers keep going up and down, but it just doesn't seem to come to an end, and in a time like this you are able to put things into perspective.

This is a time to reflect going through your life you have accumulated wealth, property, material pleasures, as well as the people that surround you today.

44:09

And these are all things that when the time comes will pass away, and or you will have to give up. Have you my question to you. Have you as yet come across any principle, any teaching, any philosophy, that has taught you, that you are fully confident, has enabled you to keep happy, to remain fulfilled, satisfied, and content, no matter what happens around you?

If the answer to that is yes, you have then i would like to propose to you that you may not even need to listen to these talks any further.

45:10

And i mean that with the best of intentions, because if you have found a philosophy that enables you to remain happy no matter what happens around you, and what happens to you, your mental state of mind remains strong and happy, well then, you have found true bliss.

Whereas, if on the other hand, you have not as yet found that, then, through the course of these talks it is our intention to show you rather than teach you, to show you an option, a choice, a choice of life, a philosophy which just may have an answer to that problem.

46:20

So, what is buddhist philosophy? I like to think, and i hope that you will eventually come to realize that what buddhist philosophy offers to you is a mechanism, a way to

fortify your minds, such that no matter what happens around you, your happiness remains the same; no matter what (goes around) goes on around you, no matter how many of the things that you like and you love are taken away from you against your will, and no matter how many things that you don't like (you dislike) are brought to you, you can remain happy, fulfilled, satisfied, and content.

47:31

Through buddhist philosophy, i hope that you will learn that that is in fact possible, that is what i have found, that is what i have come to learn in my life, and that is why i have dedicated my life to that philosophy.

Again, i reiterate (this is not an ~) this is not an attempt to force you to think in any particular way or pattern, but rather this is to present to you an option, so that you are availed of all possible options.

Throughout your life, what you have done is explored. What options are available to you to be happy in your choice of education, in your choice of job, in your choice of spouse, in your choice of where to live, where to go, what to eat, what to do?

48:44

You have almost always. I'll even go as far as saying always, unless bound by duty or responsibility wherein you would have done it, because fulfilling that duty or responsibility gives you a sense of satisfaction. But other than that, all things said and done have been for one purpose and one purpose alone, and that is for happiness.

So, i'd like to present to you a philosophy that will enable you to live a contented life, to live a fully satisfied life, to live a happy life no matter what happens around you. You don't have to believe me. All you have to do is, as i said, remain open-minded and listen to these talks.

That will be available to you weekly, and come along with us as we explore this journey.

49:56

In these talks, we'll talk about the workings of the mind; we will try and analyze and understand what happiness is. Is that merely a fuzzy sentiment, or is it something that can be understood clinically through experimentation? ~ Is there a science

behind happiness? Is there a rhyme and reason, (is there) logic behind happiness? Is it something that can be explained using a formula? These are some of the questions we will look for answers.

What about pain? What about disappointments? what about pleasure? These are some of the things that we will discuss; these are some of the things we will study. Because these are some of the most important things in anyone's life.

51:08

So, in these talks, we will talk about them; we'll discuss them using examples that make sense to all of you, that you can all relate to. And as i said, you can ignore most of the customary stuff that you see on screen, that you see around me, and really my ask of you is to focus, rather on the core philosophy, the core principles that we'll be discussing.

So, we invite you to join with us. As we go on this journey, and in the next talk we will start to unravel some of the principles that will help us understand the workings of the mind, and how we need to approach the subject of happiness, to achieve a happiness that is with us forever, to achieve us happy ~ achieve a fulfillment, a satisfaction, a contentment.

That is always and forever ours to keep.

52:38

So we will conclude today's talk on that note, and before we do so, let us take a moment to transfer the merits. The transfer of merits is again a customary thing that we do, but it has great meaning. It is much like paying gratitude to all those who have helped us to listen to these talks, who have helped make this possible.

It is like thanksgiving; it's a thanksgiving talk at the end of (this this) this sermon or this talk.

So here, we will mention those who have helped us, supported us, assisted us, those who have gone to great lengths to make this opportunity available to us to study and understand and comprehend these principles and these theories, this philosophy.

53:47

It is our way of saying thank you to all who have helped us. So that is what we'll do just now, and once we've done that, we will conclude today's talk, and we look forward to continuing this discussion next week.

[Transferring the merits]

[Skipped the following (transferring merits)]

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58:46

That was the merit transfer, and in there you may have heard a lot of things that didn't make a whole lot of sense to you, and that is perfectly fine. Things will start to make sense eventually. There's no rush; we just need to take out time with things, but it is, nonetheless, a hugely beneficial and wonderful thing to do.

And that is to be grateful to all who are the reason that we are able to live the life that we are that we live today, happily, content, and be able to engage in the things that make us happy.

So, what we just did there was to transfer merits to all of them. What all that means, and how well that works, we will discuss and understand in future talks.

59:49

On that note, we will conclude today's talk, and we look forward to seeing you on the next one.

May the blessings of the noble triple gem be with you all.

[The end]

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