

CHAPTER VI

THE CONCEPT OF FAITH



It seems that faith is one of necessary conditions adopted in every religion. In the case of Buddhism, sometimes it is widely understood that one of major differences between Theravada and *Mahayan* lies in the former does not see the necessity of faith while faith is extremely required in the latter. In this chapter we will explore the concept of faith in the *Sutta Nipata* and the Lotus Sutra.

The Concept of Faith in the *Sutta Nipata*

Parayana (on Going to the Far Shore), that is the last chapter of the *Sutta Nipata*, includes one hundred seventy-four verses. It consists of "Introductory verses" (fifty-six verses), the ninety-two verses of the dialogue between the Buddha and each one of sixteen disciples of *Bavari* Brahman, and *Nigamana* (concluding remarks) made up of short prose and twenty-six verses.

"Introductory verses" mentions the origin that sixteen disciples of *Bavari* Brahman visited the Buddha, in the dialogue between the Buddha, the subject, that what kind of person the Buddha is or how it is to go over the matter of life and death, underlies, and here the words of praise to the Buddha are repeated. Concluding remarks are the latter developments. There is composed the praises and longing for the Buddha. Furthermore, here it is taught to rise the faith (*saddha*), in regard to this teaching is concluded with declaration of faith to the Buddha and the Law of nirvana preached by the Buddha.

Culla-Niddesa gives the commentary for *Parayana* (on Going to the Far shore) and the *Phinoceros*. *Parayana* have been considered the oldest scripture. At the beginning, making a start from the verses of *Pingiya's* Questions (and the answer from the Buddha). *Paramattha-jotika* says, "*Pingiya* was one hundred and twenty years old." He asks the question on "the doctrine for abandonment of birth and old age.

The verse 1120.... 'I am old, weak with my complexion gone', said the venerable *Pingiya*. 'My eyes are not clear; my hearing is not good. May I not perish meanwhile, [still] ignorant. Teach me the doctrine, so that I may know the abandonment of birth and old age here.' The verse 1121.... 'Seeing [people] being smitten in the midst of forms, *Pingiya*', said the Blessed one, '[for] negligent people do suffer in the midst of forms, therefore you, *Pingiya*, [being] vigilant, abandon form for the sake of non-renewed existence.'

Pingiya said “I do not like to perish (*ma anassim*) as an ignorant (*momuha*) person slipshoddily (*antara eva*) without comprehension (*asacchikatva*) of Your Law.” Because *Pingiya* reflected his body (*kaya*) and said that he was old, his eyes were not clear, and his hearing was not clear. The Buddha preached to abandon attachment to form (your body, *kaya*). It means that the Buddha preached *Pingiya* the practice (*patipada*) leading him to the state of *arahat*.

The verse 1122.... ‘Four directions, four intermediate directions, above, [and] below, these [are] the ten directions. There is nothing in the world which has not been seen [or] heard or thought or perceived by you. Teach me the doctrine, so that I may know the abandonment of birth and old age here.’

The verse 1123.... ‘Seeing men afflicted by craving, *Pingiya*, said the Blessed One, ‘tormented, overcome by old age, therefore, you, *Pingiya*, [being] vigilant, abandon craving for the sake of non-renewed existence.’ In spite of hearing the Buddha’s preach, *Pingiya* did not attain excellent state (*visesa*) for reason of ineffectuality by old age. So, he praised the Buddha by the verse of “four directions” and, he begged again the Buddha’s instructions. The Buddha preached to abandon craving (*tanhadhipanna*). After that, *Pingiya* firmly established at the stage of the non-returner (*anagami-phala*). *Paramattha-jotika* says, ‘According to what I have heard, *Pingiya* thought that my uncle (*matula*), *Bavari* could not hear the instruction of various oratorical (*vicitra-patibhana*). Because of *Pingiya*’s distraction (*sineha-vikkhepa*) by his affection to *Bavari*, *Pingiya* could not attain the stage of *arahat* (*arahatta*).’

Next, the prose of *Parayana* is as follows:

This the Blessed One said while staying among the *Magadhas* at the *Pasanaka* Shrine. Asked and questioned in turn by the sixteen attendant *brahmins*, He answered their questions. If, knowing the meaning of each question, [and] knowing the doctrine, anyone were to enter upon the doctrine and what conforms with the doctrine, he would go to the far shore of old age and death. These doctrine go to the far shore, therefore the name of this exposition about the doctrine is “Going to the far shore”.¹¹

Then, the verses concerning *Pingiya* of *Nigamana* (concluding remarks) in *Parayana* are: *Pingiya*, who had been *Bavari*’s disciple, went back to the bank of the river *Godhavari* for telling to *Bavari*, that the Buddha had appeared, with permission of

¹¹ This prose is the conclusion of the Capter on Going to the Far Shore. *Paramatta-jotika* says, “this prose is the passage by *Sangiti-kara* (editor of reduction for the sutta).”

the Buddha after the questions and answers between the Buddha and sixteen *Bavari's* disciples.

Pingiya starts to recite “the going to the far shore” in front of *Bavari* in the verse 1131. The verse 1131.... ‘I shall recite the going to the far shore’, said the venerable *Pingiya*, ‘As he saw it, so the stainless one of great intelligent taught it. For what reason would the *naga*, without sensual pleasure [and] without desire, speak falsely?’

Paramattha-jotika says: ‘Naga’ means Buddha. ‘Without sensual pleasure (*nikkama*)’ means same as *akamakamin* (state of not being gratifying one’s own desire) or *pahinakama* (abandonment of sense-desire). More it includes meaning of viriyavant (diligent one) or egress evil (*akusala-pakkha nikkhamati*). ‘Without desire’ means ‘without forest of desires (*kilesa-vana-virahita*)’ or without craving (*tanha-virahita*) ‘For what reason would the *naga* speak falsely?’ proves that ‘the Buddha abandons these craving, because anybody speaks falsely by reason of craving.

At first, *Pingiya* praise the Buddha in the verses 1132 to 1137. The verse 1132.... Well then, I shall expound the beautiful utterance of the one who has left stain and delusion behind, who has given up pride and hypocrisy. The verse 1133.... The Buddha, thruster away of darkness, the one of all-round vision, gone to the end of the world, gone beyond all existence, without *asavas*, with all misery eliminated, named in accordance with truth, is served by me, *brahman*. The verse 1134.... As a bird leaving a small wood might inhabit a forest with much fruit, so I too leaving those of little vision have arrived [at one of great vision], like a goose [arriving] at a great lake.

The verse 1135.... If any persons explained to me previously, before [hearing] *Gotama's* teaching, [saying] “Thus it was; thus it will be”, all that was hearsay, all that increased my speculation. The verse 1136.... The darkness thruster is seated, alone, brilliant, that light-maker *Gotama* of great understanding, of great intelligence. The verse 1137.... Who taught me the doctrine which is visible, not concerned with time, the destruction of craving, without distress, the likeness of which does not exist anywhere.

Paramattha-jotika says: ‘The beautiful utterance’ of the verse 1132 is ‘the utterance on the Buddha’s virtue (*guna-upasamhit*)’. ‘One... named in accordance with truth, is served by me, *brahman*’ of the verse 1133 links to the common name of truth (*sacca*) only that *Gotama* is the Buddha. ‘Brahman’ is ‘to address (*alapati*) to Bavali. ‘Those of little vision (*appadassa*)’ of the verse 1134 means ‘those little wisdom, including *bavariya*’. ‘*Gotama* of great understanding’ (*bhuri-pannyana*) of the verse 1136 means ‘one who raise the flag of wisdom’. ‘Of great intelligent (*bhuri-medhasa*)’ means ‘one of extensive wisdom (*vipula-panna*)’.

Pingiya, in the reply *Bavari's* asking of the verses 1138 and 1139, talks the deep and burning faith of *Pingiya* himself to the Buddha, The verse 1138.... ‘Can you stay away from him even for a moment, *Piginya*, from *Gotama* of great understanding, from

Gotama of great intelligence, The verse 1139.... who taught you the doctrine which is visible, not concerned with time, the destruction of craving, without distress, the likeness of which does not exist anywhere?

The verse 1140.... 'I cannot stay away from him even for a moment, *brahman*, from *Gotama* of great understanding, from *Gotama* of great intelligence. The verse 1141.... Who taught me the doctrine which is visible, not concerned with time, the destruction of craving, without distress, the likeness of which does not exist anywhere. The verse 1142.... I see him with my mind as if with my eye, being vigilant day and night, *brahman*. I pass the night revering him. For that very reason I think there is no staying away from him. The verse 1143.... My faith and rapture, [and] mind, and mindfulness do not go away from the teaching of *Gotama*. In whatever direction the one of great wisdom goes, in that very direction bow down. The verse 1144.... I am old and of feeble strength. For that very reason my body does not go away to there. I go constantly on a mental journey, for my mind, *brahman*, is joined to him. The verse 1145.... Lying floundering in the mud, I swam from island to island. Then I saw the fully-awakened one, the flood-crosser, without *asava*.'

Paramattha-jotika says: 'Lying floundering in the mud, I swam from island to island' in the verse 1145 means 'Lying floundering in the mud of craving, I approached (*abhiganchim*) from a teacher to a teacher.' 'Then I saw the fully-awakened one, the flood-crosser, without *asava*' in the same verse means 'When I wandered (*anvahindati*) with such bad view (*duddhitti*) I met the Buddha at the *Pasanaka* shrine.'

The whole of verses 1140 to 1145, *Pingiya* utterance, are very moving. I think that it is the prototype of faith in primitive Buddhism to the Buddha and the teachings that the Buddha preached. Concerning the faith to the Buddha, in the verse 1142, *Pingiya* says, 'I see him (the Buddha) with my mind as if with my eye... For that very reason I think there is no staying away from him. Concerning the faith to the Buddha's teaching, in the verse 1143, *Pingiya* obviously says, 'My faith and rapture, [and] mind, and mindfulness do not go away from the teaching of *Gotama*.'

As his determination from this time on, in the verse 1144, *Pingiya* says, 'I am old and of feeble strength. For that very reason my body does not go away to there. I go constantly on a mental journey, for my mind, *brahman*, is joined him (the Buddha).'

Pingiya's conviction, that he is joined the Buddha, is very splendid. When the verses 1147 ended (*avasane*), knowing "ripeness of the capacity to understand the teachings of Buddha" (*indriya-paripaka*) of *Pingiya* and *Bavali*, the World-honored One emitted golden light, still staying at *Shravasti*. *Pingiya* saw the light and thought 'what is this light', then, feeling the Buddha standing in front of himself, he told *Bavali*, 'the Buddha has come.' *Bavali brahman* put his hands together in prayer with his standing up.

Knowing the both of them to be suitable, The Buddha preached the verse 1146 to *Pingiya* only, with talking to *Pingiya*. The verse is as follows.

The verse 1146. 'As *Vakkali* has declared his faith, and *Bhadravudha* and *Alavi-Gotama*, in just the same way you too declare your faith. You, *Pingiya*, will go to the far shore of the realm of death.'

Paramattha-jotika says about meaning of this verse: 'As, becoming intent upon faith (*saddha-adhimutta*), *Vakkali* got *arahatta* by embracing of faith-responsibility (*saddha-dhura*), or *Bhadravudha* and *Alavi-Gotama*, in just same way You utter faith (*pamuncassu saddham*), then being intent upon faith, strive to observe "All phenomena are without permanence (*sabbe sankhara anicca*)" and you go to Nirvana (the far shore of the realm of death, *maccu-dheyya para*), said the Buddha and finished the instruction. When the Buddha finished the instruction (*desana-pariyosana*), *Pingiya* firmly established the stage of *arhat* (*arahatta*) and *Vabali* the stage of the non-returner (*anagami-phala*). The five-hundred disciples of *Vabali* became the stage of the stream-winner (*sotapanna*).' Liking to tell his own pure faith (*pasada*), *Pingiya* expressed the verses 1147 and 1148 as bellow.

The verse 1147.... 'Hearing the sage's word[s], I believe all the more. The fully-awakened one, with deceit removed, without [mental] barrenness, possessing ready wit. The verse 1148.... Knowing the super-*devas*, knows everything, high and low. [He is] the teacher who puts an end to the questions of those who are in doubt, [and] admit it. The verse 1149.... Assuredly I shall go to the immovable, the unshakable, the likeness of which does not exist anywhere. I have no doubt about this. Thus consider me to be one whose mind is so disposed.'

Paramattha-jotika says: '(One) with possessing ready wit' (*patibhanavat*) of the verse 1147 means 'One with analytic insight' (*patisambhida*). 'Knowing the super-*devas*' (*achideva*) of the verse 1148 means knowing the various laws of the super-*devas* (*adhideva-kara*). That is that 'knowing the super-devas, knows everything, high and low' means 'the Buddha knew all kinds of laws which make self and others exceed *deva*.' Both of 'the immovable' and 'unshakable' of the verse 1149 means annihilation (*nibbana*). 'Assuredly I shall go to' means 'I shall just certainly (*ekamsen'eva*) go to the stage of the *nibbana* without residue (*anupadisesa nibbana-dhatu*). 'I have no doubt about this' means 'I have no doubt to annihilation (*nibbana*). 'Thus consider me to be one whose mind is so disposed' means 'by the Buddha's instruction (*ovada*) that in just the same way you too declare your faith, I make myself rise (*uppadetva*) faith (*saddha*), and emanate (*vimuccitva*) only through embracement of faith (*saddha-dhura*) and declare intention upon faith (*saddhadhi-mutata*), then *Pingiya* mentions the Buddha, 'Thus consider me to be one whose mind is so disposed.'

The Concept of Faith in the Lotus Sutra

Hearing the Buddha's preaching of "Expedient Means" chapter in the foregoing chapter, *Shariputra* at the beginning part in the "Simile and Parable" chapter says:

'So when we first heard the Law of the Buddha, we immediately believed and accepted it, supposing that we had gained understanding.'

'My body and mind are at ease and I have gained a wonderful feeling of peace and security.'

'Today at last I understand that truly I am the Buddha's son, born from the Buddha's mouth, born through conversion to the Law, gaining my share of the Buddha' Law.'

At that time *Shariputra*, wishing to state his meaning once more, spoke in verse form, saying:

'When I heard the sound of this Law, / I gained what I had never had before. / My mind was filled with great joy, / I was released from all bonds of the net of doubt. / / I am certain I will become a Buddha, / to be revered by heavenly and human being, / turning the wheel of the unsurpassed law / and teaching and converting the bodhisattvas. /

Shariputra declared himself more clearly to be absolutely confident that he would become a Buddha, than the disciples in the *Therigatha* and *Theragatha* of *Khuddaka-nikaya*. Just after this verse, the Buddha grants *Shariputra* the venerable prophecy, says:

'*Shariputra*, in ages to come, after a countless, boundless, inconceivable number of *kalpas* have passed, you will make offerings to some thousands, ten thousands, millions of Buddhas, and will honor and uphold the correct Law. You will fulfill every aspect of the way of the bodhisattva and will be able to become a Buddha with the name Flower Glow Thus Come One, worthy of offerings, of right and universal knowledge, perfect clarity and conduct, well gone, understanding the world, unexcelled worthy, trainer of people, teacher of heavenly and human beings, Buddha, World-Honored One.'

Seeing that *Shariputra* have received the prophecy, the four kinds of believers, namely, monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen, and the heavenly being, dragons, *yakushas*,

gandharvas, asuras, garudas, kimnaras, mahorages, and others in the great assembly saw how *Shariputra* received from the Buddha this prophecy that he would attain *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*, their hearts were filled with great joy and danced without end.

More, heavenly beings spoke these words: 'In the past at Varanasi the Buddha first turned the wheel of the Law. Now He turns the wheel again, the wheel of the unsurpassed, the greatest Law of all!' These words are related to the first turning the wheel of the Law (*Dhamma*). It is the Buddha's preaching His first sermon of the Law after enlightenment and converted His five former companions (ascetics) at *Mrgadava* (Deer Park) in Varanasi (near present-day Benares) of Central India (*Bahrat*).

'The first turning the wheel of the Law (*Dhamma*)' means the first presentation of the Buddhism in this world by the Buddha, who granted the entreating from Brahma three times. At that place the Buddha preached the doctrine of the Four Noble Truth and the Noble Eightfold Path. Heavenly beings' words in the "simile and Parable" chapter of the Lotus Sutra ranked the Lotus Sutra as the second turning the wheel of the Law (*Dhamma*), the greatest of all Law.

After heavenly beings spoke, the sons of heavenly beings, wishing to state the meanings of heavenly beings' these words once more, spoke in verse form. It is as follows:

In the past at Varanasi / You (the Buddha) turned the wheel of
the Law of the four noble truths, / making distinctions, preaching that
all things / are born and become extinct, be- ing made up of the five
components. / Now you turn the wheel of the most wonderful, / the
unsurpassed great Law. / This law is very profound and abstruse; /
there are few who can believe it. Since times past often we have heard /
the World-Honored One preaching, / but we have never heard / this
kind of profound, wonderful and superior Law. / Since the World-
Honored One preaches this Law, / we all welcome it with joy. /
Shariputra with his great wisdom / has now received this venerable
prophecy. / We too in the same way / will surely be able to attain
Buddhahood, / throughout all the many worlds / the most venerable, the
unsurpassed goal. / The Buddha way is difficult to fathom, / but you will
preach with expedient means, according to what is appropriate. / the
meritorious deeds we have done / in this existence or past existences, /
and the blessings gained from seeing the Buddha— / all these we will
apply to the Buddha way.

Up until this point in the sutra, only *Shariputra* has grasped what Shakyamuni Buddha is expounding. *Shariputra* said to the Buddha that now from the World-honored One the others hear what they had never heard before, and all have fallen into doubt and perplexity. *Shariputra* begs that for the sake of the four kinds of believers the Buddha will explain the causes and conditions and make it possible for them to shed their doubts and regrets.

So that others might understand, the Buddha relates the parable of the three carts and the burning house. This parable illustrates the Buddha's statement in the "Expedient Means" (second) chapter that the sole purpose of the Buddha's advent is to enable all people to attain Buddhahood, and that the three vehicles of voice-hearers, cause-awakened ones, and bodhisattvas are simply means to lead people to the one Buddha vehicle.

The summary of this parable is as follows:

Suppose, the Buddha says, there is a very rich man who has many children. One day a fire suddenly breaks out in his spacious but decaying house, and his children, totally absorbed in playing games, do not know that the house is in flames and ignore His cries of warning. He therefore resorts to an expedient means to induce them to come out of the burning house. He shouts to them that outside he has three kinds of carts they have long wanted: a cart pulled by a goat, another by a deer, and a third by an ox. Immediately they race outside. Having coaxed them to safety in this way, the rich man gives each of his children a cart—not one of the three kinds he had promised, but a much finer carriage, adorned with numerous jewels and drawn by a white ox. The Buddha compares the burning house in the parable to the threefold world, and the flames to the sufferings of birth and death. The rich man is the Buddha, who appears in this troubled world to save the people, the children are all living beings, and the games in which they are so absorbed are worldly pleasures. The three kinds of carts originally promised represent the three vehicles, or the provisional teachings, and the great white ox carriage symbolizes vehicle of Buddhahood, that is, the Lotus Sutra.

This parable is one of the seven parables in the Lotus Sutra.

After the Buddha expounded the parable of "the three carts and the burning house", the later part of this chapter emphasizes the importance of faith, pointing out that even *Shariputra*, known as foremost in wisdom, could "gain entrance through faith alone" and not through his own wisdom or understanding. The verses of this part are as follows: 'Even you, *Shariputra*, / in the case of this sutra / were able to gain entrance through faith alone /

The Lotus Sutra is the sutra that emphasizes "faith".

On the other hand, many people are brought up to think that "believing" is equal to blind obedience. Blind obedience is dangerous because it means subordinating

one's own will to that of another. Moreover, belief in a transcendental being can cause one to ignore or try to escape the world he lives in. As long as the object to be worshiped is a transcendental existence, followers tend to attach greater importance to obedience rather than to understanding. They tend to become more concerned with a world other than this one. Such belief simply means giving up one's will and yielding himself completely to the will of a prophet or a transcendental, and possibly nonexistent, being. It is nothing but blind faith.

In Buddhism, the object of faith should be the universal Law immanent in life. Shakyamuni Buddha admonished people to believe in the Law. One of the underlying assumptions of Buddhist thinking is that every person can and must strive to be united with the truth (the Law of life), not through an intermediary, but directly, by attainment of Buddhahood. Wisdom, with which one grasps the Law of life, comes forth from the depths of one's own life. In the "Expedient Means" (second) chapter of the Lotus Sutra, Shakyamuni Buddha declared that the Buddha wisdom is beyond the reach of analysis. The Buddha then revealed that only through faith can one fully attain the Buddha wisdom. Our faith, or ultimate intuitive wisdom, will lead us to Buddhahood, but to lead others to the law of life, we must often utilize analytic reasoning.

Comparison and Comment

Faith is a basic attitude emphasized in both early Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism. The early Buddhism teaches much of the religious practices so that people can attain both the actual state of people's spiritual development and the ideal state. The *Abhidharma* scholastics classified thirty-seven practices, in seven groups, as being most representative of the numerous practices set forth in primitive sutras, calling them the thirty-seven practices conducive to enlightenment. The seven groups comprising the thirty-seven practices gave rise to independent systems, each of which was believed to lead to enlightenment.

The seven groups and thirty-seven practices are as follows:

- 1, the four field of mindfulness (*cattari sati-patthanani*)
- 2, the four right efforts (*cattari sammapadhanani*)
- 3, the four psychic powers (*cattaro iddhipada*)
- 4, the five roots of emancipation (*pancindriyani*)
- 5, the five excellent powers (*panca balani*)
- 6, the seven factors of enlightenment (*satta bojjhanga*)
- 7, the noble eightfold path (*ariya atthangika magga*)

Other practices preached in primitive sutra are practice of “the five treasures”, practice of “the seven treasures”, “the eight qualities of *mahapurisa-vittaka*”, “ten *asekha-dhamma*” and so on.

Among them, practices that contain “faith” are as follows:

“The five roots of emancipation” (*pancindriyani*) are faith (*saddha*), endeavor (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samadhi*), and wisdom (*panna*). “Root” of “the five roots of emancipation” means “potential” or “ability.” Faith is cited first because it is the starting point for practice.

“The five excellent powers” (*panca balani*) correspond to the roots: faith, endeavor, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. These powers mean greater advancement of practice than the roots.

“The five treasures” are faith (*saddha*), morality (*sila*), obedient hearing (*suta*), generosity (*caga*), and wisdom (*panna*). “The seven treasures” are faith (*saddha*), morality (*sila*), obedient hearing (*suta*), generosity (*caga*), wisdom (*panna*), conscience (*ottappa*) and shame (*hina*). Faith is cited first. In the early Buddhism, it is the starting point for all Buddhist practice. So, it is considered that this practice is for beginners.

Buddhism, “the religion of wisdom,” is the rational religion. The tendency toward rationalism seems especially strong in early Buddhism. In Mahayana Buddhism there is strong emphasis on faith. I consider faith the basis of religious practice. The basis in faith made possible a kind of intellectual quest involving one’s entire being, including intuitive powers of perception and the deepest level of awareness, rather than merely analytical intelligence.

The belief on the level of daily life is different from religious faith, but neither are the belief on the level of daily life and religious faith entirely severed from each other. They are part of a shared continuum. No society can exist without bonds of mutual trust among its members. Even when we think, we still base our thought on beliefs we hold. Beliefs are the vessel of life. We can see that the conflict between knowledge and belief now commonly thought to exist is by no means self-evident. Belief is the foundation of life. In that respect, religion is an indispensable part of the life of every individual, and it plays a crucial part in each day of our lives. More people are simply not well aware of the beliefs upon which they base their lives. Awareness of our beliefs occurs when we find ourselves in a desperate situation that forces us to reevaluate. Especially, reading “*Theri Gatha*”, we can find that most of those who gathered around Shakyamuni came to Him seeking a new realm of belief after they had experienced such frustration and suffering. It should be said that the presumption of a sharp division and opposition between belief on the one hand, and understanding or knowledge on the other, which has been a hallmark of contemporary thought, is being reexamined. In its place, a new fusion of belief and knowledge is being sought.

In the scriptures of *Sutta Nipata* in *Pali*, it is found three kinds of words meaning “faith” They are: (1) *Saddha*, (2) *Adhimucca*, (3) *Pasaddha*. *Saddha* is usually translated as faith. The verses using the word “*saddha*” in *Sutta Nipata* are as follows: ‘Faith is the seed, penance is the rain, wisdom is my yoke and plough; modesty is the pole, mind is the [yoke-] tie, mindfulness is my ploughshare and goad.

Faith is often expounded by skillful simile or parable. In this verse of #77, the virtues of practice are compared to farming. #90. If any householder, a learned wise disciple of the noble ones, has understood these [four], [then] knowing [and] seeing them all not to be like this, his faith does not disappear. For how could he equate the corrupt with the uncorrupted, the pure with the impure? This verse is the Buddha’s answer to the question by a layman (named *Cunda*).

According to *Paramattha jotika*, the layman, *Cunda*, in the morning, handed vessels made of gold and offered foods to the Buddha and the monk’s group. An evil monk threw the golden vessel into his case for key. *Cunda* knew it, but said nothing because of respect for the Buddha and senior priests. In the evening, he wanted to know whether the only men who observe precepts (*samvara-yutta*) are monk (*samana*), or even the monk who has violated precepts (*bhinna-samvara*) (the monk who threw the golden vessel into his case) also is monk (*samana*), and ask the questions (the verses #83 and 85) to the Buddha. This is the last of the Buddha’s answers (the verses #84, 86, 87, 88, 89, and 90).

In this case, the faith of a learned wise and noble layperson is established on the assumption of knowledge and information. Though a general view says, “Faith is cited first. In the early Buddhism, it is the starting point for all Buddhist practice. So, it is considered that this practice is for beginners.” the general view can not be applied in this case. It might be said that even if laypersons have judged the good or evil of monks, layperson’s faith does not disappear as the Buddha instructed. #182. ‘Faith is the best wealth for a man in this world. Righteousness when well practiced brings happiness. Truth is the sweetest of flavours. They say the life of one living by wisdom is best.’ #184. ‘By faith one crosses the flood, by vigilance the ocean. By energy one goes beyond misery. By wisdom one is purified. This verse of #184 was esteemed highly on the commentaries of sutra, *Abidharma*. This verse gives the composition in the virtues of practice, beginning from “faith” and ending “wisdom”. In the expression of saying only “one crosses the flood by faith,” when one complete to cross the flood by faith, one could reach the emancipation, nirvana. But, in this verse, following faith, after vigilance and energy are mentioned, the verse is closed with the sentence of that “By wisdom one is purified.” Namely, faith, vigilance and energy are the process to wisdom. Showing In schema, this verse preaches faith→vigilance→energy→wisdom. For that reason, generally as mentioned above in exposition of “the five roots of emancipation”, “the

five treasures”, and “the seven treasures”, it is generally said that “Faith is cited first. In the early Buddhism, it is the starting point for all Buddhist practice. So, it is considered that this practice is for beginners.”

#188. Whatever faithful house-seeker has these four things: truth, righteousness, firmness, generosity, he indeed does not grieve when he has passed away. This verse answers the question of that “Having passed away from this world to the next world, how does not grieve?” (the verse 185). And this verse is for layman (house-seeker). He, in addition to acquiring faith, should go toward, not only generosity, but also truth, righteousness, firmness. The virtues of practice for layman take the same line as that for monk. #337. ‘Having abandoned the five strands of sensual pleasures, delightful in form, pleasing the mind, having gone forth from the house in faith, put an end to misery. This verse expresses that leaving house is due to faith. This verse was given to *Rahula* who is the son of the Buddha born before His renunciation of the world.

Sutta Nipata says, “In this way with these verses (#337 to #342) the Blessed One constantly instructed the venerable *Rahula*.” After the Buddha’s enlightenment, *Rahula* joined the Buddhist order and was ordained at the age of 20. He strictly observed the precepts and diligently practiced the Way, becoming well known as ‘the foremost in the observance of the precepts’ and he was one of His ten great disciples. #371. The believer, learned, seeing the way [to salvation], not following any faction among the factious, wise, having dispelled covetousness, hatred [and] repugnance, he would wander properly in the world. This verse is for monk. Faith is expounded together with “learned” (finished duty “listening” to sermons, *sutavant*.) *Paramattha jotika* says, ‘Faith of this verse means perfectly pure faith (*aveccappasada*) that possesses the quality of all kind of faith.’

The Sutta of Correct Views of No. 9 in *Majjhima-nikaya* starts from the question by *Shariputra* to *Bikkhus*. In this first question by *Shariputra*, it is considered that the perfectly pure faith (*aveccappasada*) as correct views (*samma-ditthi*) of the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-attangika-magga*). As a result, these three words of “faith” (*saddha*) in this verse, “perfectly pure faith” (*aveccappasada*), and “correct view” (*samma-ditthi*) are synonymous.

Next, the word “*pasada*” is examined. In English, it is translated “faith” or “believe”. It is appeared as *pasadana* of a neuter noun, as *pasidati* (*pasidami*, *pasideyya*) of a verb, as *pasanno* of a past participle. #563. Having seen him, become Brahma, unequalled crusher of Mara’s armies, who would not have faith, even one who is base-born? (“him” means the Buddha) #698. Hearing the word[s] at the [time of the] turning of the wheel by the excellent Conqueror, going, seeing the bull among seers, believing he asked the excellent sage about the best of sage-hoods, when the

prognostication of the one called *Asita* had come to pass. (“the bull among seers” means the Buddha)

#1147. “Hearing the sage’s word[s], I believe all the more. The fully-awakened one, with deceit removed, without [mental] barrenness, possessing ready wit. Verse #563 and #698 says, “Having seen (*disva*) directly the Buddha”, and then “having pure faith (*pasideyya*)” or “believing purely (*pasanno*).” Also verse of #1147 says, “Hearing directly the sage’s word”, and then “believe purely (*pasidami*) all the more.” The original meaning of “pasada” is purity. The fact that expresses “faith” of “believe” by the word “*pasada*” seems to show the result that is fully conscious of comprehending the basic character of “faith” as serene and pure mind.

Then, as for the words “*adhimutti*” or “*adhimucca*” they can be said as mind function that decide clearly for object. It was “belief and understanding” in old translation. More, it is considered as “mutual identity” of “faith and wisdom.” As the title of fourth chapter in the Lotus Sutra is “Faith and Understanding”, here, the translation of “faith and understanding” is contextually used as the translation of the words “*adhimutti*” or “*adhimucca*”.

The verse 559 says, Dispel your doubt in me. Have faith, *brahman*. It is difficult to obtain a sight of the fully-awakened ones repeatedly. The Buddha in the verse 558 for the question from *brahman Sela* say as follows: The verse 558: what is to be known [by me]; what is to be developed is developed [by me]; what is to be eliminated is eliminated by me; therefore I am a Buddha, *brahman*. In this verse, “What is to be known (*abhinneyya*) is known [by me]” means “*vijja*” (higher knowledge) and “*vimutti*” (emancipation). “What is to be developed is developed [by me] means “*magga-sacca*” (eightfold noble path). “What is to be eliminated is eliminated by me” means elimination of “*samudaya sacca*” (the truth that the cause of suffering, that is, illusion and desire). “*Nirodha dukkha sacca*” (the truth that all existence is suffering) is included in the word elimination of “*samudaya*” (the cause is suffering).

The Buddha proved that what is to be awakened is awakened and became to be Buddha, then encouraged *brahman Sela* by the verse 559, 560, 561. After *Sela* heard the instruction by the Buddha and understood, *Sela* in the verse #566 says: The verse 566: “These three hundred *brahmans*, with cupped hand, ask: ‘May we practice the holy life in your presence, Blessed One? *Sela* and his group understood the Buddha and the Buddha’s teaching. Then they converted. In this conversation, “belief and understanding” and also “faith and wisdom” are included. From this instance, the words of “*adhimutti*” or “*adhimuccati*” means “belief and understanding”, moreover it is considered as “mutual identity” of “faith and wisdom.”

Up to here, as for the words “*adhimutti*” or “*adhimucca*”, their usage has been examined by the example sentences. “*Adhimutti*” means “faith and understanding” in

the old translation, “intention” in the new translation. The Sanskrit Corresponding to word of “*adhimutti*” in *Pali* is “*adhimukti*”. The title of the Lotus Sutra the fourth chapter is “Adhimukti” in original text of Sanskrit. Therefore, the title is “Belief and Understanding” in English version. The summary of “Belief and Understanding” (forth) chapter is as follows:

The four great voice-hearers, having heard the parable of the three cars and the burning house that Shakyamuni’s related in the “Simile and Parable” (third) chapter, now rejoice in their understanding of its meaning. They understand that Shakyamuni’s true intention is to reveal the one Buddha vehicle that leads all people to Buddhahood. The four great voice-hearers are *Mahakashyapa*, *Katyayana*, *Maudgalyayana*, and *Subhuti*. To display their understanding of the meaning of the parable, they relate a parable of their own creation, the parable of the wealthy man and his poor son.

Briefly, it tells of a wealthy man’s son who runs away from his father in childhood. For some fifty years he wanders from one place to another in abject poverty, hiring himself out as a menial labour. One day in his wanderings he chances upon his father’s mansion. The rich old man is overjoyed to see his son again, as he wants to bequeath to him all his wealth and possessions. The son, however, does not recognize his father and run away, overwhelmed by the splendor of the rich man’s estate. The rich man sends a messenger to bring him back, but the son thinks the messenger has come to arrest him back and faints in terror. Hearing this, the father tells the messenger to release him and instead sends two of his servants dressed in dirty clothes to offer the son the work of clearing away excrement. The impoverished son happily accepts this employment on his father’s estate. After a while, his father disguises himself in dirty clothes so he can approach his son. He tells him that he can always work there, and that he will treat him like his own son. For twenty years the son works at clearing away excrement and gradually gains self-confidence. The rich man then promotes him, charging him with the administration of his property, and gradually he comes to understand all the rich man’s affairs. Eventually the rich man senses death approaching. He invites his relative, the king of the country, the high ministers, and others, and declares to them that his servant is actually his true son. He then transfers to his son the whole of his estate.

The rich man in this parable represents the Buddha, whose sole desire is to let all people enjoy the same sublime state as his own, just as the rich man wishes to bequeath all his wealth to his son. The poor son represents ordinary people, who “wander about transmigrating in the threefold without encountering the one Buddha vehicle. To lead them to enlightenment, the Buddha first employs expedient means and preaches what is appropriate to their capacities, just as the rich man trains his

son gradually. Thus the Buddha leads them gradually to higher teachings and ultimately reveals the one Buddha vehicle of the Lotus Sutra.

After the four voice-hearers' relating the parable, *Mahakashyapa*, wishing to state once more that they have received the greatest treasure of Buddhahood without earnestly seeking it, spoke in verse form. At the beginning part of the verse, saying: The Buddha declares that the voice-hearers / will be able to attain Buddhahood. / This cluster of unsurpassed jewels / has come to us unsought. /

After "Belief and Understanding" (forth) chapter, Shakyamuni preaches "the Parable of the Medical Herbs" (fifth) chapter. In this chapter, Shakyamuni relates the Buddha's impartial compassion. At the beginning of the chapter, Shakyamuni affirms His disciples have grasped the earlier teaching in the previous three chapters ("Expedient Means," "Simile and Parable," and "Belief and Understanding") that the Buddha's true purpose is the revelation of the one vehicle of Buddhahood, but that, because of the Differences in people's capacity, he first expounds the three vehicles and the five vehicles as provisional teachings.

In the parable of "wealthy man and his poor son" related by the four great voice-hearers, it is not fully clear that though the Law of preached by Thus Come One is of one form, and one flavor, because of the differences in people's capacity, the three vehicles and the five vehicles are separate.

In the next chapter, though Shakyamuni praise *Mahakashyapa* and the other major disciples understanding His preaching, He further saying, "The Thus Come One indeed has immeasurable boundless, *asamkhyas* of blessings, and though you and others were to spend immeasurable millions of *kalpas* in the effort, you could never finish describing them." Then, Shakyamuni expounds "parable of the three kinds of medical herbs and two kinds of trees" in the "The parable of the Medicinal herbs" (fifth) chapter.

Putting it shortly, in this parable, a great cloud envelops the world and sends down life-giving rain equally upon all the grasses, flowers, trees, and medicinal herbs. Though the rain is the same, the plants, trees, and medicinal herbs absorb the moisture differently and grow to varying heights according to their individual natures. Similarly, the Buddha impartially expounds only the one vehicle of Buddhahood for all people, but they understand and benefit from it differently according to their respective capacity.

The last verse of this sixth chapter, Shakyamuni saying, What you are practicing / is the bodhisattva ways, / and as you gradually advance in practice and learning / you are all certain to attain Buddhahood. This last verse makes clear it for four great voice-hearers to have unfailingly entered the path to enlightenment by believing and understanding distinctly the one Buddha vehicle of the Lotus Sutra

through the parable in “Medicinal Herbs” of the three kinds of medicinal herbs and two kinds of trees. Therefore, in “Bestowal of Prophecy” (sixth) chapter, each of the four great voice-hearers is given a prophecy that he is certain to become a Buddha. Shakyamuni specifically indicates when, where and under what name each will attain enlightenment.