

མཚོ་པ་ Lake of Lotus

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**2013 Life-Freeing Ceremony of
Dudjom Buddhist Association**

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What is Meant by “Liberation”?

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Lhasa Jokhang Temple

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Tel: (852) 2558 3680
Fax: (852) 3157 1144
Email: info@dudjomba.org.hk
Website: <http://www.dudjomba.org.hk>
Taiwan Contact:
Tel : 0989273163

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Dudjom Buddhist Association (International)
4th Floor, Federal Centre, 77 Sheung On Street, Chaiwan, Hong Kong

Tel: (852) 2558 3680 Fax: (852) 3157 1144
Website : <http://www.dudjomba.com> Email: info@dudjomba.org.hk

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Dudjom Buddhist Association's Life-Freeing Ceremony Conducted Miraculously As Usual Without the Slightest Sea Waves Under One of the Strongest "Super Typhoon Usagi" in 2013



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(A gentle reminder to readers: This article is meant to be read only by persons who have faith and belief. People who cast doubt or would make slanders are advised not to read it to avoid making evil karmas that would subject them to evil retributions.)

Over the past ten years or so, the annual Life-Freeing Ceremony organized by the "Dudjom Buddhist Association" usually took place either in April, May, or November in order to avert the season of the typhoons. Due to particular reasons, Vajra Master Yeshe Thaye and Vajra Master Pema Lhadren, the designated Instructors-in-Charge of the "Dudjom Buddhist Association", made a special arrangement for the Association's annual Life-Freeing Ceremony this year to be held on 22nd September 2013 (Sunday), which fell on an **"Astronomical Tide Day"**.

An "Astronomical Tide Day" refers to a period during which the range of the tidal forces due to the Sun and the Moon is at its maximum (that is, during the times of a new moon, and of a full moon). The 22nd of September 2013 is the 18th day of August in the lunar calendar. Every year on this day, the astronomical tidal currents are the strongest and most intense. The Moon, though smaller than the Sun, has its tidal forces 2.17 times stronger than the Sun. When the Moon and the Sun move together to form a straight line, the tidal forces exerted by the two entities would act on the same direction, intensifying the rise and fall of tidal sea



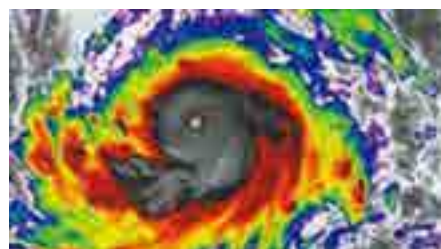
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levels. This is a kind of **Energy with sucking forces**. Because of the lagging effects in oceans, tidal currents of the astronomical tides generally occur about one and a half days after the new moon and full moon, that is, around the 2nd, 3rd and 17th, 18th days of the lunar calendar. If the astronomical tides come around before or after the landfall of a **typhoon**, there will be an outbreak of a **storm surge**.

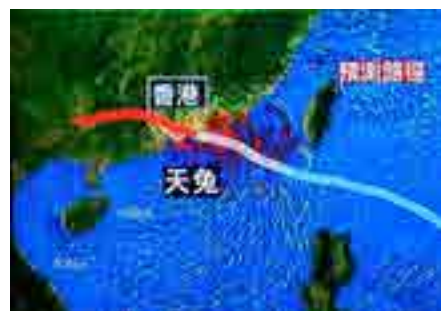
22nd September 2013 was not only an “Astronomical Tide Day”, it coincided with the time when the Super Typhoon “Usagi” was barreling toward Hong Kong in close distance. “Usagi” was regarded as the strongest typhoon coming to Hong Kong in 34 years. The US Joint Typhoon Warning Centre also rated it second only to a tornado at Atlantic Category 4 Super Typhoon grading with the strongest speed at 60 m/sec. “Usagi” was a super typhoon that was formed within 24 hours at the highest speed with a full, solid and clearly-defined eye-wall. Its radius measured over 500 km. As “Usagi” was different from ordinary typhoons, **it has received attention from astronomers all over the world**. The followings are two local news reports:-

[The SUN] Though Super Typhoon “Usagi” has not yet entered within the 800-km area of Hong Kong yesterday, it has already attracted attention from a group of Hong Kong people with special interest in “typhoons”. It is not only because “Usagi” is intensifying explosively, it is also said to be this year’s strongest storm on earth. After days’ of monitoring, NASA also found that “Usagi”, with its storm circle (spiraling bands?) exceeding 1,000 km in diameter, has a very solid and intact structure, as well as sturdy symmetrical cross-flow. It has intensified from a tropical storm into a typhoon in no more than 24 hours. No wonder NASA has classified “Usagi” as a **“Monster Super Typhoon”**.

Although “Usagi” is formed and active in the northwest Pacific Ocean, it has attracted global meteorologists’ close attention on its development and movement directions. NASA found “Usagi” as having sturdy symmetrical cross-flow with a solid and intact inner eye-wall, which proves that this typhoon has received the least interference during its formation and development stages. The accelerating speed of “Usagi” is equally shocking as it is intensified from a tropical storm into a typhoon within merely 24 hours. By US classification, it has reached a Category 4 hurricane level and is the strongest storm ever detected on earth this year. **[from The Sun –21 September 2013 Saturday, 6:10 am]**.



Usagi



天兔與其他颱風比較			
風名	超級颱風 天兔	颱風 卡特里娜	超級颱風 荷貝
時間	2013年 9月22日	2005年 8月29日	1979年 8月2日
地點	吹襲香港	吹襲新奧爾良	吹襲香港
中心 風力	210公里/ 小時	280公里/ 小時	240公里/ 小時
直徑	1,000公里	402公里	185公里
災情	/	1,833人死； 經濟損失810 億美元	12人死； 600人無家 可歸； 房屋75%損 壞受損

Apple Daily





[Apple Daily] According to the U.S. storm system, the maximum sustained wind speed of “Usagi” is more than 251 kmph per minute, which belongs to Category 5 “Super Typhoon” grading. Hence, “Usagi” is described by the U.S. media as a “Monster Typhoon”. As shown in the satellite images of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the central part of “Usagi” looks like the lateral side of a bunny, which together with the black middle part of the image, resembles a scary “black rabbit”. “Usagi” displayed a “double eye-wall” phenomenon on the day before yesterday ([20 September 2013](#)), and the ring-type eye-wall brings the strongest convective rain bands of wind and rain. While ordinary typhoons only have one eye-wall, “Usagi” has two. As pointed out by the Central Weather Bureau of Taiwan, the appearance of a double eye-wall of “Usagi” represents that its strength has increased to the limit, and 85% of such cases would gradually weaken in the next 24 hours. The strongest ever typhoon in the history of Hong Kong, Typhoon “Hope”, also had a double eye-wall. “Usagi” was weakened to a severe typhoon at 8 p.m. last night ([21 September 2013](#)) but its winds near the center were still at 175 km/hour at 9 p.m. last night. **[from Apple Daily – 22 September 2013]**.

Moreover, the large-scale Life-Freeing Ceremony organized by the “Dudjom Buddhist Association” was held exactly on 22 September 2013 from 12 noon to 4 p.m. in the afternoon. As early as on 21 September 2013, Tropical Cyclone (TC) Warning Signal No.3 has been issued by the Hong Kong Observatory with a forecast that TC Warning Signal No.8 was likely to be hoisted in the afternoon or evening of 22 September 2013. All those who were concerned about the “Dudjom Buddhist Association”, or who had purchased the event tickets, **were wondering if** the Life-Freeing Ceremony organized by the “Dudjom Buddhist Association” was **going to be or should be** cancelled?

At that time, only the members of “Dudjom Buddhist Association”, that is, the disciples of Vajra Masters Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren, knew clearly that the Life-Freeing Ceremony would definitely go ahead as scheduled, **without any thought or action to cancel this event**. Why is it so? It is because as early as on 19 September 2013 at 5:07 p.m., Vajra Master Yeshe Thaye and Vajra Master Pema Lhadren have sent out an **open e-mail** to all their disciples, instructing that:



[Since the contents of the teaching this time are very important to sentient beings belonging to any of the “realms”, therefore if “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” do come, there will be winds and rains. We can only request them not to come in large scale or to stay in a relatively far distance, but cannot refuse them (to come)..... There is no cause for alarm or panic and no need to feel surprised at all. Both of us will adjust the contents of our teachings accordingly.]

“Usagi” (which literally means the “Heavenly Rabbit” in Japanese) carries the word “Heaven” in its name, which corresponds fully to the phenomena caused by the advent of “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” this time, especially the winds and rains so aroused by the “Nagas (Dragons)”. Accordingly, the two Vajra Masters and all disciples of the “Dudjom Buddhist Association” made their prayers in accordance with the aforesaid instruction in inviting the coming of “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” to participate in this Dharma event. Their assistance was also sought for to ensure that the Life-Freeing Ceremony would be conducted safely and peacefully, and that all the participants would not get disturbed or interrupted.

“The Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” refer to the eight types of protective deities in Buddhism, namely: Devas (Heavenly Beings), Nagas (Dragons), Yaksas, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas, Kinnaras and Mahoragas. Just the two Races of Devas and Nagas alone are already sufficient enough to form a very sizable agglomeration of energies as they came to join this major life-freeing Dharma event, which was specifically arranged in typhoon season to enable them to receive the teachings on the “Avalokitasvara Bodhisattva’s Willow Branch and Pure Water Life-Freeing Ritual of Practice, the Heart Sutra, the Mantra of Prajnaparamita, the Bhaisajyaguru Buddha Mantra, and the Bhaisajyaguru Buddha’s Pure Water Blessings Instructions”. In greeting and receiving the arrival of “the Deva, the Naga and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities”, Vajra Master Pema Lhadren had specifically made revelations on “transforming the negative energy to positive energy, and controlling the flow of energies” with explanations of the relevant scriptures. For those of you who would like to view the detailed instructions, as well as on the miraculous weather conditions of that day, please visit the YouTube channel of “Dudjom Buddhist Association”: <http://www.youtube.com/user/DudomBuddhist>

At the same time, Vajra Master Pema Lhadren also enlightened on the subjects of “Would human beings be reborn as animals after death? How to help your pets to get liberated from the “Animal” realm? What the ‘fetal doors’ for rebirths would be?” Despite the threat of the likely issuance of TC Warning Signal No.8 anytime of the day, the number of worshippers getting on board was still as high as 300 strong. Had all ticket-holders turned up that day, there should be some 400 participants. This magnificent scene was attributed to the fact that “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” have responded to the prayers of the “Dudjom Buddhist Association”, which appealed for their compliance, courtesy and cooperation. Thus, there was no heavy rain to bar people from coming, nor stormy wind to scare people away. The weather was fair and the air was fresh on that day, with tiny



drops of Dharma rains drizzling at about noon time to celebrate the propagation of the Holy Dharma. There was mild breeze blowing, and the sea surface, which looked even more peaceful than ordinary days, was calm without any waves. It was until 4 p.m. in the afternoon when the Ceremony was fully completed and concluded that “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” sprinkled light Dharma rains again to express their gratitude for the transmission of the Dharma teachings.

Eventually, it was at 6:40 p.m. on that day that TC Warning Signal No.8 was hoisted and was subsequently lowered at 10:25 a.m. in the next morning. Thus, all participants and working staff were given sufficient time to return home safely. Even for those worshippers coming from Guangzhou, they also sent a message reporting their safe and unobstructed return to their homes at Guangzhou on that same day. One can see how complete and perfect this event was! The followings are the feedback and reflections from some members of the “Dudjom Buddhist Association” after the event:

(Disciple XXX would like to congratulate our two Guru Masters on the successful launching of this Life-Freeing Ceremony under such difficult circumstances. It is indeed a blessing to all sentient beings. On that day, TC Warning Signal No.3 was in force and Signal No.8 would be hoisted. Yet there were still a lot of worshippers participating in this life-freeing activity. Disciple saw people coming to the event were old men holding walking sticks, aged ladies walking slowly, innocent children accompanied by adults. On their faces, there was no sign of fear or panic to this typhoon-stricken life-freeing event. I only saw that they were not afraid of the wind and rain in supporting the “Association” and they were really commendable. Disciple will continue to make effort in assisting Gurus to propagate the holdy Dharma. I pray and wish two Gurus good health, longevity to benefit more motherly sentient beings.)

(Disciple XXX: Disciple was very happy about the smooth running of the Life-Freeing Ceremony this time. The fact that both the worshippers and Dharma brothers were all able to return home safely before the hoisting of the TC Warning Signal No.8 was truly amazing and coincidental. Disciple find it very encouraging that with our perseverance, we could work against all odds to eventually make this Ceremony to be complete and perfect. Disciple can deeply feel the conviction and faith of the two Gurus in spreading the holy Dharma to benefit all sentient beings. I feel shameful that when I sometimes want to do some Dharma practices or life-freeing activities, most of the time I end up choosing to do something else due to other commitments. This makes me think of Gurus’ advice and warning on “distractions”. Disciple will remember carefully your instructions that “we should do our best in everything with regard to the well-being of all sentient beings, show respect to each and every sentient being, and balance the interests of all parties with focus on the overall situation.” Disciple would strive to put this in practice.)

(Disciple XXX: I wish two Guru Masters well! Very grateful to two Gurus for your constant caring of each and every one of us as your disciples. I am particularly grateful to two Gurus’ arrangements for the Life-Freeing Ceremony and your kind enlightenment on its origin, enabling disciple to understand the auspicious merits and the special significance



of this Life-Freeing Ceremony. Disciple is deeply honoured to be arranged by the two Gurus to participate in this occasion which is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to sow virtuous causes and to make virtuous conditions with the Devas and Nagas. Earlier on when the typhoon was approaching Hong Kong, disciple did not want to see the life-freeing event suddenly cancelled or postponed, thereby depriving many sentient beings of an opportunity to be rescued and to receive the Holy Dharma. Therefore, disciple **chanted sutras and freed lives** to dedicate all merits to Vajra Masters Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren, as well as all of those gurus in preaching the Authentic Dharma for their good health and longevity so as to turn the everlasting Dharma Wheel for the benefits of all sentient beings in this world. Disciple believe that so long as we are serious in the life-freeing process, it will appeal to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for their blessings, as well as to the virtuous gods and protective deities for their protection so that each and every participant can accumulate merits and return home safely.)

(Disciple XXX: Disciple would like to express heartfelt gratitude to the two Vajra Masters for this inspiring piece of enlightenment on the “Karmic Power of Causes and Effects”. Disciple is also grateful to Dharma Parents who, in seeking the well-beings for all kinds of sentient beings, are still taking good and meticulous care of these highly dependent and ignorant children like us. The Life-Freeing Dharma Event this time can invoke the coming of a group of long-awaiting Devas and Nagas to receive the Holy Dharma has well testified the empowered spiritual attainments and earnest sincerity of our two Vajra Masters. Our beloved Dharma Parents even introduced them to all of our Dharma Brothers in making alliance under the same big Mandala. This kind of gratitude and kindness is too immense to be measured! To accomplish such an auspicious and great virtuous action, the two Vajra Masters have actually put in enormously great mercy and compassion. Just in resolving the various defying conditions leading to the cancellation of this “Life-Freeing Dharma Event” alone, the extraordinary anti-stress courage and strengths so displayed (**by the two Vajra Masters**) have gone beyond the level of ordinary people.

People often say that Hong Kong is a blessed place which can, therefore, avert the calamities of the storm this time. In fact, a geographical factor alone is hardly sufficient to explain this **“extremely coincidental” phenomenon**. Disciple deeply believe that one of the reasons is that inside this “natural barrier” of Hong Kong, there reside some Guru Masters of the Right Buddhist Dharma like our two Dharma Parents, who are steadfastly holding onto their conviction of “spreading



and propagating the Right Buddhist Dharma to benefit endless motherly sentient beings”. Such an awe-inspiring force of righteousness is good enough to touch the heavenly skies, receiving the blessings and protection from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, various celestial and virtuous gods, as well as an enormous group of protective deities. It is understood that every year between the 16th day and 18th day in the lunar calendar month of August, **the Sun, the Moon and the Earth are almost in a straight line**. During this period, the sea water is subject to the maximum range of tidal forces which is a constant natural phenomenon. This time, the Devas and Nagas grouped under the name of “Usagi” **came all the way here, without stopping at anywhere**, carrying “strong winds, heavy rains, huge waves and high tides” with them **in a “four-pronged attack” manner**. The intensity of the power and its momentum were so overwhelming that even the Central Meteorological Bureau of PRC issued the following special message at 8:00 pm on 21 September (on the eve of the “Life-Freeing Ceremony”). (Please visit the following link to read the message):<http://www.weather.com.cn/news/2013/09/1972264.shtml###>

Nevertheless, on 22 September 2013, the 4-hour Life-Freeing Ceremony and preaching presided by the two Vajra Gurus were conducted as scheduled and completed successfully under a calm and peaceful weather condition with slight drizzles. Disciple really wonder whether I could still have the virtuous merits and causal conditions to encounter **such kind of calm and peaceful “coincidence”** again in the future? Disciple is grateful to our beloved Dharma Parents for all that they have offered, in particular their compassionate vow to defy all odds in making it possible for all kinds of sentient beings to receive the Dharma teachings and their benefits together.

As for those sentient beings who have made adverse conditions or caused obstacles to this “Life-Freeing Dharma Event”, be it in actions or in their minds, disciple pray for the compassion of all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to unlock their wisdom such that they can distinguish right from wrong, and make more virtuous deeds in benefiting oneself and others, thus undermining the geometric multiplications of the evil fruitions sown and incurred by them.

Lastly, disciple would like to enquire whether it is permissible for me to tell my relatives and family members attending this Life-Freeing Ceremony the contents of the instructions as contained in the two Vajra Masters’ e-mail, such that they would know more of the auspicious and underlying meanings. I wish the two Vajra Masters to have good health and longevity in this world.)



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Replies from Vajra Masters Yeshe Thaye and Pema Lhadren:

We have received feedback from a number of you ([disciples of the two Vajra Masters](#)). Some of them responded with great sincerity. Our replies are as follows:

1. **Coincidence in time** – Someone asked that the Life-Freeing Event this time and the advent of the storm correspond each other in time. **Everything seems to be very coincidental in every aspect**. There are really **too many coincidences** indeed.
2. Replies from both of us – There is **no** coincidence “without a cause” in the worldly realm but only the **“matching of Causes and Conditions”** due to **“cause-and-effect** interconnections”. More than ten years in the past, all our life-freeing activities were deliberately held in April to May, or in November in order to avoid the typhoon season. This is mainly because both of us consider that your life-freeing operations were not yet mature enough to make you capable of handling any sudden changes.
3. The deliberate avoidance of ([the typhoon seasons](#)) has made it difficult for the two anticipating races of Devas and Nagas to receive the Holy Dharma. Their earnest requests are still subject to ([pending for](#)) the “matching of Causes and Conditions”. Until 2013, when we both consider that the maturity of your operation of life-free activity is about right to cope with sudden changes, and also having considered that the matter has dragged on for so many years and cannot be withheld any longer, therefore we made special arrangements this year to advance the launching of the event. Of course, there are also other reasons which we do not want to explain in more details.
4. The riding facility for the Bodhisattva Avalokitasvara is the Dragon. That is why the Nagas are particularly fond of the transmission of the teachings on the “Avalokitasvara Bodhisattva’s Willow Branch and Pure Water Life-Freeing Ritual of Practice”, which is quite **similar to the liking of human beings**. They are also very demanding in choosing the transmitting Gurus, whom once chosen by them, would not be changed. That is why they are willing to wait for our arrangements though we both know that this cannot be dragged on for long.
5. When the storm is intensified, both of us did not want you to wrongly make some “prayers in refusing the coming of the Devas and Nagas”. Therefore, we sent out a special email, stating that **“We can only request them not to come in large scale or to stay in a relatively far distance, but cannot refuse them (to come)”**. The point is that to



be able to receive Dharma teachings with “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” together from the same Gurus, under the same Mandala, and in the same period of time, they will become one of your protective deities. Because of their very great powers, especially this whole group of Devas and Nagas which are so unusual and are endowed with awareness and the yearning minds for Dharma practice, they will be of the greatest assistance to you in your future Dharma practices, and also on your path to rebirth unobstructedly.

6. Those sentient beings who have made “prayers to refuse the coming of the Devas and Nagas to receive Dharma teachings”, they will make “a cause for resentment in one’s mind” even though they have received the holy Dharma from the same Gurus, under the same Mandala and in the same period of time. They will face obstacles in receiving the Holy Dharma in the future. That is why both of us have to remind you specifically. Those who have followed the Gurus’ instructions, they would not go wrong this time.
7. Those sentient beings who have had the opportunity to come but did not show up, they have missed the chance to forge alliance with “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities”. This shows their lack of sincerity and virtuous merits, especially those of our disciples who do not know how fortunate they are, and did not participate in this Life-Freeing event.
8. “The Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities” will be specifically grateful to all participants on that day, especially the disciples of ours, who have officially become their Dharma brothers. To see how strong and powerful of this group of Devas and Nagas, simply take a look at the relevant news.
9. On the day of the Life-freeing event, “the sea was calm and weather was good”. It remained so throughout the four-hour long Dharma event and not a single wave was found. All these are owe to the compliance of the promise made by the Devas and Nagas that in coming to receive the Holy Dharma, they must not and would not cause any elements to jeopardize the event, but rather to strengthen their protection (for it). Accordingly, both of us also have to keep our promise of not cancelling this Dharma event. Even if there were no more fishes available for our release, this event could not be cancelled.



10. Your prayers are also very important as they represent your willingness to become Dharma brothers with “the Devas, the Nagas and the Eight Races of Non-Human Entities”. Other protective deities joined in for the protection too, **including you who are also protecting your Gurus and protecting the Holy Dharma**. Therefore, do not have such thinking that the protection was from the invisible protective deities, therefore you do not need to try your best. **Being the Gurus, we must also make our best effort for it**. This is the **“matching of Causes and Conditions”**.
11. In terms of timing, the Devas and Nagas also **fit in so perfectly well and appropriately** that all working staff were given sufficient time to get back home. The Ceremony ended at 4:00 p.m. and the TC Warning Signal No.8 was hoisted at 6:40 p.m. Both their arrival and departure took place outside the natural barrier of Hong Kong, thus reducing the risks incurred to Hong Kong to the minimum.
12. They came in massive numbers because both of us would only open this Life-Freeing Dharma event to them this time. Moreover, at our request, they have been weakened (in strength or speed?) at the time they arrived, but still in vast numbers.
13. All sentient beings of any kind who have **intended to do or have already done** something to hinder the activities of the Life-Freeing Dharma event this time, be it only a slight bad mind, they will have to bear very big evil karmic retributions. It is because there are too many sentient beings involved this time and they are endowed with enormously great powers and energies which cannot be taken lightly. They **must confess and repent their sins quickly until they are fully and completely cleared of** (these effects of karmic retributions).
14. All sentient beings of any kind who have assisted in the activities of this Life-Freeing Dharma event will receive great merits in **this rarely-happened occasion in thousand years**. These merits are auspicious because we do not always have the opportunity to accumulate them. Offering assistances to the Gurus, to the Devas, to the Nagas, to the Human Beings, to the sentient beings being released, to the sentient beings in the spiritual realms.....there are actually so many sentient beings involved. Just on the aspect of assisting the Gurus, one has already made profound merits, let alone the **Minds** of so many sentient beings involved.
15. Praying also requires wisdom. Do not think that praying out of one’s good minds will be all right. One needs to take into account various perspectives, otherwise one does not know the evil karma so committed. Do not think that there is no karmic force just by saying a few sentences of “prayers”, this is **merely wishful thinking and is not true**.



16. The Devas and Nagas, though possessing enormous powers and energies, still have difficulties in beseeching the Buddhist Dharma. It is because Buddhist Dharma is not a kind of **worldly supernatural ability**. Rather, it refers to a kind of **in-depth understanding and insight of the “Enlightened Awareness”, a kind of realization attained from real and authentic Dharma practices**. One **may not be able** to meet people who possess such kind of abilities for directions and instructions **even after having gone through thousands of kalpas**. Besides, one must have already accumulated enormously great virtuous rewards and also know how to seize the opportunity.
17. To be able to get rebirth in the Pure Land does not simply rely on chanting several times of the Buddhas’ Mantras, or Buddhas’ Holy Names. It also does not rely simply on “empowerments” and the rituals of the practices on “visualization” as the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. It must **require an interplay with the “matching of Causes and Conditions” in many aspects and other conditions**. Because of the **“inconceivable strength of karmas, and the ever-changing situations in the spiritual realm”** which is the Law of Nature, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni was still subject to the “Law of Causes and Effects” even after attaining “Perfect Enlightenment”, whilst remaining in the “Three Realms” (**of the Desire Realm, the Form Realm and the Formless Realm**). Some people are **so naive and ignorant** as to say that “it is not necessary to accumulate merits and make virtuous actions of life-freeing activities and smoke ceremony because this is a kind of attachment”. People who say such words **do not understand the true and genuine Buddhist teachings**. There are also people thinking that if someone would help praying after one’s death and the deceased’s body becomes soft, it means that the deceased is already reborn in the Pure Land. These are **“one-sided willful ignorance”** which is not the real Buddhist Dharma, nor the truth of the fact. It should be noted that “the Three Realms” operate the “Law of Causes and Effects”, while “the Dharma Realm” operates the “Law of Non-attainment” under the “Nature of Emptiness”. These two kinds of Laws cannot be mixed up, but they are being explained and adopted **with confusions** by Buddhist learners nowadays. Those **who do not know the Buddhist Dharma** are inclined to say (**to other people**) “Do not get attached”, which is a clear testament to their **lack of understanding** of these two kinds of Laws, resulting in **endless sentient beings now being mis-led by the erroneous Buddhist Dharma messages** of today.
18. The auspicious experiences this time **can only be explained to those people with strong faith and good belief**. **These cannot be mentioned to those people who are skeptical or likely to make slanders**. It is because whoever slanders about them will make evil karma which would then lead to evil retributions. **For their benefits**, it is not appropriate to mention this to them.

Wishing for the increasing accumulations of all meritorious wonders!



Dudjom Buddhist Association's Life-Freeing Ceremony



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Dudjom Buddhist Association (International)
4th Floor, Federal Centre, 77 Sheung On Street, Chaiwan, Hong Kong

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**The Profound Abstruseness of
Life and Death**



The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (48)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren
Translated by Simon S.H. Tang

- **Who are the Protectors in the “Posthumous World”? What is Meant by “Liberation”?**

Excerpt of Last Chapter:

Various Reasons on the Formation of Different Scenes at the "Moment of Death"

The “scenes at the moment of death” can be roughly classified in the following categories in accord with the varieties of the “main causes” and “auxiliary conditions”:

1. The “Separation of the Four Elements” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”, including all kinds of memories) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the ‘Separation of the Four Elements’ in



the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death” (please refer to the articles on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issues 8 and 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

2. The “Endorphins Inside the Brain” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the “endorphins inside the brain” of the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death” (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 21 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
3. The “Karmic Forces” – the “main cause” (the internal “consciousness” and “sub-consciousness”) conjoins with the “auxiliary conditions” (the “karmic forces” of the external circumstances) in forming the “scenes at the moment of death”. This can be further classified into the following two kinds:
 - i. Wholesome Ones – arising from: (a) virtuous retributions (please refer to the article on “The Meaning of Near-death Experiences” in Issue 21 of the “Lake of Lotus”); and (b) the efforts of one’s Dharma practice (the main theme of this article in this issue).
 - ii. Unwholesome Ones – arising from: (a) vicious retributions; and (b) the forces of karmic creditors in seeking compensations on one’s karmic debts.

According to the records of different surveys, most of the dying people had seen the following scenes:

1. Protectors or avengers:
 - (i) good ones – saw kith and kin who had passed away, unknown protectors, deities or Buddhas coming to fetch for oneself.
 - (ii) bad ones – being besieged by a crowd of ferocious persons or beasts, and going along in company with groups of people who looked confused.
2. Strange places:
 - (i) good ones – saw pavilions, balconies, buildings, flower fields, rivers, light zones, towns or cities.
 - (ii) bad ones – saw wilderness, forests, darkness, caverns, hells.
3. Messy Issues that cannot be recalled clearly.

How would the Buddhist point of view comment on these phenomena? According to the Buddhist teachings, it was said that rebirth would take place within forty-nine days after a person has passed away, then why would a dying person see the kith and kin who **had passed away long time ago** still coming to fetch for him or her? Why had not the kith and kin taken rebirths after so many years posthumously? Are the appearances of these deceased persons merely the illusions of the person who is going to die? Or were they really true? Are there any other reasons? Are those strange places the destinations where they are going to be reborn into? Under what circumstances would the normal rebirth of a dying person be negatively encumbered? Is there any way to help a deceased person to avert sufferings and elevate to a better place of rebirth?

Human beings have four kinds of conditions of consciousness ([please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 26 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)) as follows:

1. **Beta β waves** – the “conscious condition” of daily living;
2. **Alpha α waves** – the relaxed “consciousness condition”, such as in entering into the elementary stage of ‘visualization’, or at the first stage of “mental concentration”; or the condition when the “spiritual body” is **slowly separating** from the “physical body”;
3. **Theta θ waves** – the peaceful “conscious condition” of having entered into higher levels of “visualization”, or at the deeper levels of “mental concentration”;
4. **Delta δ waves** – slow “conscious condition” of not having any dreams, and in a stage of slow-wave deep sleep.

In fact, how does the arising of the different stages in approaching death and its “transformation of consciousness” affect the thoughts and behaviors of dying patients? What are their relationships with the “scenes at the moment of death”? ([Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 29 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)) How should the family and kin and kith who take care of the dying patients respond to the “transformation of consciousness” and change of “scenes at the moment of death” for guiding the emotions and spiritual direction of the dying patients? Could the “transformation of consciousness” and the change of “scenes at the moment of death” be complementary to each other? Furthermore, the **“disintegration of the Four Elements”** of the physical body **also affects** the “transformation of consciousness”, as well as on the change of the “scenes at the moment of death”. Hence, how should one support and provide guidance to a dying patient in order to **reduce or resolve** the predicament from these problems?



What is the Ultimate Assistance in the First Stage of Approaching Death?

The care-givers, kin and kith and professional counselors should perform the following steps when a dying person is approaching the “first stage of death”:

1. **Accepting and Understanding** (please refer to Issue 30 of the "Lake of Lotus");
2. **Listening and Observing** (please refer to Issue 30 of the "Lake of Lotus");
3. **Analyzing and Adopting** (please refer to Issues 31, 32 and 33 of the "Lake of Lotus");
4. **Leading Out and Guiding In** (please refer to Issue 34 of the "Lake of Lotus");
5. **Accompanying with Unspoken Consensus** (please refer to Issues 35-40 of the "Lake of Lotus").

The General Change of the dying persons' Emotions

(Please refer back to Issue 41 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

What is the Ultimate Assistance in the Second Stage of Approaching Death?

(Please refer back to Issue 42 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

The Secret of “Flash-back” During the Third Stage of Approaching Death

(Please refer back to Issue 43 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

Various Adventures While Progressing towards the Fourth Stage of Death

(Please refer back to Issue 44 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

The Actual Departure When Approaching the Fifth Stage of Death

(Please refer back to Issue 45 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

Scenes at Death and Revelation of Sharing Death Experiences

(Please refer back to Issue 46 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

What are the “Risks and Opportunities” in the “Posthumous World” and Its “Corresponding Training on Death”?

(Please refer back to Issue 47 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



Who are the Protectors in the “Posthumous World”? What is Meant by “Liberation”?



To all living beings, “death” is inevitable. No matter it is for oneself or for the need of caring the relatives and friends who are approaching “death”, one should have certain understanding about the process of “death”, as well as the risks and opportunities of the “posthumous world”. Otherwise, **all sorts of regrets, and risky situations rather than opportunities**, would certainly arise. After all, **opportunities are for those persons who are prepared for it.**

This kind of **preparation** can be classified into **two kinds of situations**: “**while the person is still alive**”, and “**when one has passed away**”. For the situation when one is alive, there have been discussions in quite a numbers of articles previously. For the “posthumous” situations, even more of it cannot be neglected. In fact, what is the advantage of being a Buddhist? Are there any protectors available to help the Buddhists, or even the non-Buddhist sentient beings in the “posthumous world”? Are there any evidence from the sutras? **What kind of conditions** are required by the protectors as guidelines to protect and assist the deceased ones? If the sentient beings act in accordance with those conditions, would they be able to avoid the retributions of bad karmas? Would these protectors have adequate ability to help every sentient being in resisting the retributions of one’s own bad karmas? What was the comment of the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni on this kind of protection and assistance?

In Chapter Eight of the “Gasping with Admiration on the Hell King Yama”, in the First Volume of the “**Sutra on the Aspirations of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva**” [0784c03], it was mentioned (in **modern terminologies**) that: **a King of Ghost by the name of Zhu Ming** asked the Lord Buddha: “**Bhagava (the Most Noble One)**, when the sentient beings are at the end of their lives, if they hear of the name of a Buddha, or the name of a Bodhisattva, or a phrase or a verse in the Mahayana Sutras, I can use the power of ‘mental concentration’ to help those kinds of beings, who are about to fall into the lower realms (**of hells, hungry ghosts, and animals**) due to their commitments of minor evil karmas, to be ‘liberated’ (**here the word ‘liberation’ means that they can be released from the predicaments of inferior realms, and to be reborn into better environments**), except for those who have committed the ‘five major crimes of sins that will bring immediate disasters’ (“**Anantarika-karma**” in Sanskrit, or “**Pañcānantarya**” in Pāli)* and the nature of killing.

The Lord Buddha then told this King of Ghost Zhu Ming: “You have great compassion so that you can develop such a great aspiration to protect the sentient beings at their turning points of life-and-death. In the future, you must not draw back from this aspiration and assist both males and females who are at their moments of death, so that they can be **liberated from those predicaments**, and enjoy permanent peace and happiness.”



This King of Ghost Zhu Ming then said to the Lord Buddha: “Don’t worry that I would withdraw my aspiration. Until my present body will be perished, all through my life, I will continue on with my every single thought to protect all sentient beings of this world, so that these people could be in peace and happiness at their moments of life-and-death. I merely wish that all of them will believe in, and accept, my words all the time, so that all of them would be liberated from their predicaments, and will have great merits at their moments of life-and-death.”

At that moment, the Lord Buddha told Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha that: “Such a Great King of Ghost, Zhu Ming, has been a ghost for hundreds and thousands of lives, and has been protecting the sentient beings at their moments of life-and-death. This is because of this Bodhisattva’s great aspiration of deep compassion. Even though he now appears as the figure of a great ghost, but in fact he was not really a ghost. From this kalpa onward, and after 170 kalpas, this Great King of Ghost would attain Buddhahood by the Holy Name of “Noncorporeal Buddha”. The name of the specific Kalpa will be known as the “Peaceful and Happy Kalpa”, while the name of the world will be known as the “Impeccable World”. The life-span of this Buddha in this world will be uncountable in the “measurements of kalpas”. Ksitigarbha, the affairs of this Great King of Ghost is so inconceivable, and the numbers of sentient beings who will be liberated by him to be reborn into the heavenly and human realms will also be so limitless.” (Kalpa refers to a period of time. A “small Kalpa” is the period of time taken for a cycle of “formation, sustainment, deterioration and emptiness” of the whole universe. Twenty such “small Kalpas” will make one “medium Kalpa”, and four such “medium Kalpas” will make one “great Kalpa”).

As for this “Great King of Ghost”, the word “Great” represents that he is the king of the “ghost realm”, and is the highest person-in-charge. The highest person-in-charge has certain abilities, but it does not mean that he has the power to resist the karmic forces from the “Law of Causes and Effects”, simply because the “karmic forces are so much inconceivable”. Even so that up to the level of a Buddha, if the Buddha remains within the “Three Realms” (namely: “the Desire Realm, the Form Realm, and the Formless Realm”), he is still constrained by the “Law of Causes and Effects”. As the Laws of Nature prevails within the “Three Realms”, and so even though the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had already “attained Buddhahood”, he was still subject to his previous karmic retributions of “having wheat for horses as meals”, “headaches for three days”, and “bleeding diarrhea”, and so on.

The “Great King of Ghost”, as well as all other Dharma protectors, are all relying upon their “great aspirations of deep compassion”, as well as the limited abilities that they possessed during those times. Since this “Great King of Ghost” considered that the most painful, most dangerous and most helpless moment for all sentient beings is at the very moment of their deaths. Thus, he made his aspiration to help those at the brink of death and those who are about to transmigrate to the more inferior realms. This kind of aspiration further brings about the effect that he continues to be in charge of life-and-death matters, life after life, for cycles of generations, and thus he becomes the “Great King of Ghost”. In so doing, he has accumulated lots of virtuous deeds and merits, and thus the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had predicted that he will “attain Buddhahood” at a certain time. Yet, this prediction was made on the condition that he cannot withdraw his aspiration in-between these times, as it was based upon the locus of his present accumulated virtuous karmas, as well as on the persistence of his aspiration. As such, the prediction is not permanently unchanged.

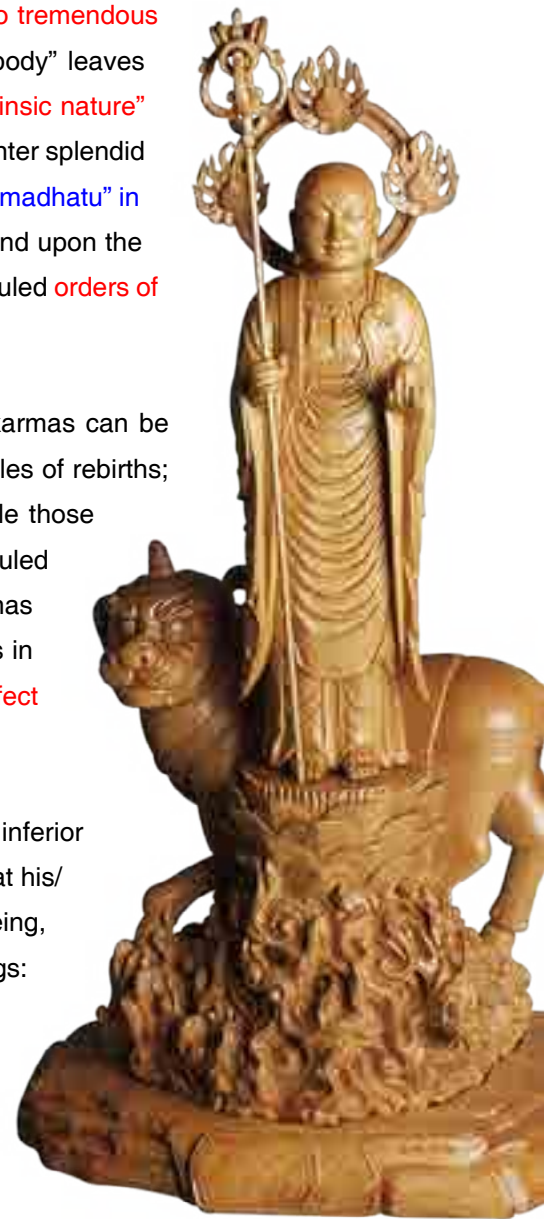


Although this “Great King of Ghost” possesses certain powers, and that this power will become stronger and stronger as it is being enhanced by the great compassion. However, it is impossible to utilize this “limited power” “without rationales”. Hence, he offers the necessary conditions in order to render his help in such a fashion by setting the threshold in restricting his application of this limited power. Why does he want to do so? It is simple for two reasons: Firstly, “resources are rather limited”; and Secondly, “constraints due to karmic forces”. If this “Great King of Ghost” does not find a way to guide those in need of help by inducing their intrinsic virtuous karmas (forces coming from oneself) to flourish, but merely depend on the application of “uni-directional ability” of this “Great King of Ghost” (forces coming from outsiders), there is no way for him to revert their “karmic retributions”. It might even make things worse, while having the intention to play smart; but, as a result, it might hurt both oneself and others.

Each sentient being has his/her own “combinations of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas”. During the period of death, the person is in an unsteady state, and is subject to tremendous variations, up to quick changes in an instant. In general, when the “spiritual body” leaves the “physical body” and enters into the spiritual domain, exposure of one’s “intrinsic nature” associates with enormous magnitude of energies, so the individual would encounter splendid and wonderful visions of brightness, heavenly realms, the Realm of Truth (“Dharmadhatu” in Sanskrit), and so on. However, what sorts of scenarios follow will have to depend upon the “combinations of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas”, in which the possible scheduled orders of occurrence of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas might take place.

Within the “combinations of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas”, the types of karmas can be classified into (i) those that have been accumulated through countless past cycles of rebirths; and (ii) those that are in progress at present. Their difference lies in that: while those virtuous and non-virtuous karmas that have been accumulated are being scheduled to arise in certain orders of occurrence, those virtuous and non-virtuous karmas that are in progress at present would have their effects in affecting the priorities in the orders of occurrence of those past accumulated karmas. This is a special effect of the two kinds of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas in progress at present.

Thus, when a sentient being enters into the difficult moment of falling into an inferior realm, the situation is definitely very urgent and dangerous. This also means that his/her non-virtuous karmas are about to manifest. In order to help this sentient being, one must adopt a method to remove the fuels that start off to promote the sufferings: that is, to alter the hierarchical orders on the “combinations of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas” in such a way as to first induce the possible manifestation of the virtuous karmas, in replacement for those non-virtuous karmas of declining locus into inferior realms to take place. As such, what is the way to first induce this possible manifestation of the virtuous karmas of sentient beings?



The method is that a sentient being must **concur** with the Buddhist teachings, and is willing to **accept** the assistance from a Buddha. Hence, within the aspiration of the “Great King of Ghost” Zhu Ming, the condition has been set that “**so long** as whosoever has heard of the Holy Name of either a Buddha, or a Bodhisattva, or a sentence or a verse in the Mahayana sutras”, he would make use of the power of “mental concentration” to guide this sentient being, who is about to fall into an inferior realm, to get away from that locus of decline. Furthermore, the aspiration that the “Great King of Ghost” Zhu Ming had proposed to the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni was this: “he so wishes that, when each sentient being is at the moment of life-and-death, he/she would **believe and accept** what he has said.” It is because if sentient beings act in accordance with his guidance, the objectives that “nobody would not be liberated from their predicaments, and that they would obtain great benefits”. This is the condition set forth to rescue all sentient beings, as proposed by the “Great King of Ghost” Zhu Ming, which adopts a **restrictive** fashion to apply his **limited** abilities. This not only **reserves the power** for accomplishment of utmost effects, but also complies with the “Law of Causes and Effects”. There is **no action against the conditions** that might result in the wastage of resources. It is also the **best kind of application** in the good “matching of causes and conditions”.

From the above-mentioned sutra, one can come to know of the following facts:

1. As a matter of fact, what is the advantage of being a Buddhist? - One of the most important advantages is the possibility of **“upgrading the levels of transmigration”**.
2. In the “posthumous world”, are there any protectors to assist Buddhists, even to all those non-Buddhist sentient beings? - There are dedicated protectors available, but there are also some minimum basic requirements being set.
3. Are there any evidence in the Sutras about this? – Such as the **“Sutra on the Aspirations of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva”**.
4. What are **the factors** that these protectors will take for consideration when trying to protect the deceased sentient beings? - Taking “the methods that could induce virtuous karmas of the sentient beings” for reference.



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5. If a sentient being follows suit with all the conditions, **must** the person be able to get away from the retributions of non-virtuous karmas? – It all depends on whether there are **adequate virtuous karmas** within the “**combinations of virtuous and non-virtuous karmas**” for overcoming the retributions of non-virtuous karmas. It is “**always impermanent in worldly matters, and there is nothing that is absolutely definitive**”, and so sentient beings must widely perform wholesome deeds to create more virtuous karmas during their life-times, otherwise it is **difficult** to achieve the good “matching of causes and conditions”.
6. Would these protectors have adequate ability to help each and every sentient being to resist his/her own retributions of non-virtuous karmas? - Those protectors’ abilities are rather limited, and so they must have to **make use of other resources: by making use of the virtuous karmas of the sentient beings themselves**.
7. What were the comments of the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni on this sort of protection? - No matter it is the person who renders assistance, or the one who receives assistance, one must **gradually accumulate the power of virtuous karmas for the ultimate resolution on the issue of life-and-death**. Even the Buddha is only assisting as in the role of a third party (**auxiliary conditions**), while the sentient being’s own-self is playing the main role (**main cause**).

For those readers who would like to know the methods in dealing with the changes in the “posthumous world”, please visit the ‘**Video Series on the Posthumous World**’ on **YouTube**. You will be greatly inspired with wisdom. The following is the link to those videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/DudjomBuddhist>

.....(**To be Continued**)

***Note: “Anantarika-karma”:** The **Five Major Crimes of Sins** bringing immediate disaster, also known as Five Karmas of Sins, or Five Violation Sins. They are the most serious crimes in Buddhism. The word ‘violation’ refers to heinous, meaning the sins are extreme violation of common rationalities. Committing the Five Major Crimes of Sins will be the main cause of one’s karma to be falling into the Hell without any intermissions or any pauses of sufferings (“**Avicinar Aka**” in Sanskrit). Upon the end of one’s life, the person will go directly into this particular Hell, without going through the process of bardo or any intermissions in-between, neither will there be any pauses of sufferings. That is why this type of sin is called the Five Karmas of non-pause sufferings, or Five Sins that cannot be rescued. These five kinds of sins are respectively:

1. **Killing one's mother**;
2. **Killing one's father** (as the parents give birth to oneself, and so the killing of one's own parents violates the Buddhist teachings of being filial to one's parents and be respectful to one's teachers);
3. **Killing an "Arhat"** (one who has already been liberated from the cycle of karmic existence);
4. **Wounding a Buddha**: such as the historical event of Devadatta who tried to using rocks in hurting the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, so that he might want to replace the Lord Buddha to be the leader of the Sangha community of monks.
5. **Creating a schism in the Sangha community of Dharma practitioners** – damage the harmony and congruency of the Dharma practitioners (regardless of whether these are either monks/nuns, or laymen, so long as they are the Sangha community of Dharma practitioners) who practice the six elements of harmony and obedience

[Remarks:

1. The newly-released book on "The Meanings of Near-Death Experiences (1)" has been published. Its contents include the articles on "The Meanings of the Near-Death Experiences" from Issues 1 to 10 of the "Lake of Lotus".
2. The newly-released book on "The Meanings of Near-Death Experiences (2) – The Key Points at the Moment of Death and the Essential Revelations of the Tibetan Book of the Dead" has been published. Its contents include the articles on "The Meaning of the Near-Death Experiences" from Issues 11 to 20 of the "Lake of Lotus".
3. The newly-released book on "The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences (3) – The Various Ways of Realization and Rescue of Dying Kith and Kin" has been published. Its contents include the articles on "The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" from Issues 21 to 30 of the "Lake of Lotus".]



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- History of Research on “Near-Death Experiences”
- Special Common Features of “Near-Death Experiences”
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The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (48)

The Mind-Training Episode (11)

By Vajra Master Pema Lhadren Translated by Fong Wei

- **What Are the Fruitions of Requitual in Teaching Sentient Beings the “Mind Ground Visualization on the Requitual of the Four Kinds of Gratitude”?**
- **Would One Still Be Reborn Again After Entry Into the “Pure Land”?**

Excerpt of Last Issue

For the general populace, and even up to the great Dharma practitioners, their objectives of Dharma practice should be more or less of the following types:



1. **Praying for worldly desires** – For example: to seek for oneself and one's own relatives to have "longevity, recovery from illness, success in one's career, good marriage, wealth increase, averting disasters and relief from sufferings, as well as reunion with those deceased loved ones". Also, there are those who hope to get the "ease of heart and security at the present life", etc.; or for "fame, wealth, respect" in order to study Buddhism; as well as for those who put in efforts to practice the Dharma.
2. **Rebirth in the good realms** – For example: to hope and pray for rebirth in the heavenly realm, or in the human realm, and not to fall into the evil realms (of animals, hungry ghosts and hells).
3. **Liberation from the tractions of the "cycle of karmic existence"** – to hope and pray for **the freedom** in deciding for oneself as to whether one would be reborn into the six realms (of heavens, asuras, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and hells), or whether to remain in the highest level of the "Realm of Form", such as the "Akanistha" (the "Heaven at the End-of-Form-Realm"), which is beyond the control of the tractions. (Please refer to the explanations on the "Three Realms" in the article on the "Profound Abstruseness of Life and Death: The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" in Issue 17 of the "Lake of Lotus").
4. **Attainment of Buddhahood** – The recovery of one's "Primordial Nature" and the originally possessed and boundless capabilities, which are free from any bondages and to remain in the "Dharma Realm". (The "Nature of the Mind", also known as the "Buddha Nature", or the "Primordial Nature", refers to the original possession of that most crystal clarity of awareness. Please refer to the articles on "The Meaning of Near-Death Experiences" in Issues 4 & 5 of the "Lake of Lotus").

What are the methods that one can choose in order to achieve these four types of objectives? What will be their effects? What are the **critical key points** that one should pay attention to when judging upon and in choosing those methods of Dharma practice? Regardless of what kinds of religions, the practice methods can be broadly divided into the following types:

1. **Prayers** – Including confessions, repentance of one's conducts, and in the making of aspirations and wishes;
2. **Recitations** – mantras, Buddhas' Holy Names, or sutras;
3. **Visualizations** – themes include the formulae for different types of "meditation", or even the making use of the internal functions of one's body for coordination.



Irrespective of which types of practice methods, it must include the training of one's "mental strength". Otherwise, it would not be able to produce any effects. One of the important points for judging which of the practice methods are the most effective ones is the degree of influence that these can have on one's "mental strength"? What percentage will they constitute?



The "Mind-Training Episode"

The focus of "mind-training" is on how to "visualize one's mind". Starting from Issue No.38 of the "Lake of Lotus", the various articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" have clearly described those who are able to "visualize the mind" could achieve complete liberation and swiftly attain "Buddhahood", and is the important guideline in the "**Mahâyâna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**". Then comes the question as to how to "visualize one's mind"? Whether it will be fine by just "visualizing" oneself as the Buddha or the "deity"?

What are the contents and procedures of one's "Visualization"? In modern terminology, it is the question of how to proceed with the programming of one's "visualization" in order to be most effective? There are countless and endless methods of "visualization", and so which kinds of them are correct? To which levels of "visualization" do they belong? What kind of situations are they specifically for? How are their effectiveness being demonstrated? Are there any opposing effects, or side effects? A series of such questions are the "important points for consideration" in choosing one's method of "mental visualization" (please refer to the articles on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" from Issues 38 to 41 of the "Lake of Lotus").

In the "**Mahâyâna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**", the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us on the due process and conditions of "Mental Visualization". Hence, this Sutra can be said to be a pivotal point and convergence of all kinds of "mental visualization" methods, and is also the foundational basis for all the Dharma practices which can help all sentient beings to swiftly attain Buddhahood.

Then what actually are the grading/levels, procedures and conditions for these methods of "mental visualization" in Dharma practices? Can one jump some of the steps in these practices? Before further explanations are given, let us first have a look at the "**Mahâyâna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**" to see how the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had generally classified the "mental visualization" methods, from shallow to deep, and from the foundational basis to progressive elevation:

1. Mental Visualization on the Requit of Gratitude
(Please refer to the article on "The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice" in Issues 40 to 44 of the "Lake of Lotus");



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2. Mental Visualization on the Repulsion of Desires;
3. Averting the Delusive Mind;
4. Visualization of Entry into the Holy Wisdom;
5. Visualization Method of the Mind Ground;
6. Mental Visualization on the Bodhicitta; and
7. Visualization on the Three Great Secret Dharmas.

In the “**Mahâyâna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**”, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us on the “Mental Visualization” method for the “Mind Ground Visualization on the Requit of the Four Kinds of Gratitude”. These four kinds of gratitude and kindness that require one’s requital are:

1. **Filial Gratitude to Parents** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 40 of the “Lake of Lotus”);
2. **Gratitude to all Sentient Beings** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 41 of the “Lake of Lotus”);
3. **Gratitude to the King** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 42 of the “Lake of Lotus”); and
4. **Gratitude to the Three Jewels** -
 - (i) **The Gratitude to the “Buddha Jewel”** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 43 of the “Lake of Lotus”);
 - (ii) **The Gratitude to the “Dharma Jewel”** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 44 of the “Lake of Lotus”);
 - (iii) **The Gratitude to the “Sangha Jewel”** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 45 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
5. **The methods for repaying the Four Kinds of Gratitude and Kindness** : -
 - (i) The differences in the requital of gratitude under the ten kinds of **Almsgiving, Close and True Paramitas** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 46 of the “Lake of Lotus”);
 - (ii) The gratitude requital method through the **Emptiness on the Nature of the Three Wheels of Actions** (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issue 47 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



What Are the Fruitions of Requitual in Teaching Sentient Beings the “Mind Ground Visualization on the Requitual of the Four Kinds of Gratitude”?



“Mental Visualization” is extremely important and is the **only method** for Dharma practice. With regard to the foundational base of “Mental Visualization”, one must first **understand and repay** the four kinds of gratitude and kindness. Yet the requital methods are not those that the ordinary people would generally think of by doing everything they can with their physical bodies for repayment. Instead, it is an interplay of a special “Mental Visualization” method with some various kinds of virtuous behavioral actions in making the requital. In other words, the “Mind Ground Visualization on the Requitual of the Four Kinds of Gratitude” is **not just about** the “doing of virtuous deeds with a good mind alone”, but the application of a **“non-attaining method on one’s mental visualization”** to do virtuous actions of all kinds. In so doing, it can then be regarded as “repaying the four kinds of gratitude and kindness”.

What are the fruitions of requital for “repaying the four kinds of gratitude and kindness”? It depends on what kind of good deeds one is doing, since **each of the fruitions of requital are rather different**. As there are many kinds of virtuous actions, so actually what kind of virtuous deeds sentient beings should do so as to enable them to attain “Buddhahood ultimately”? As enlightened by the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni, if those

sentient beings with pure convictions can, upon hearing the method for the “Mental Visualization” of the “Mind Ground Visualization on the requital of the four kinds of gratitude” as stated in this **“Mahâyâna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”**, come to **believe, understand, accept, abide by, practise, uphold, explain it** to all sentient beings, and **write it down for circulation** so as to teach and guide them the **“non- attaining”** practicing mode in order to manifest the **“Emptiness on the Nature of the Three Wheels of Actions”**, albeit using only the words of a Four-Versed Hymn to express privately the “Emptiness on the Nature of the Three Wheels of Actions” to one person in order to remove one’s crooked, distorted and evil views in orientating one’s **mind towards “Realization”**, this sentient being should finally be able to attain the “Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment”(Buddhahood) **in the future**. By then, this sentient being can directly or indirectly teach countless sentient beings, enabling them to



enter into the correct and genuine Buddhist path, such that the seeds of the “Three Jewels of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha” will never end nor discontinued. (Please refer to the article on “The Wisdom in Directing One’s Dharma Practice” in Issues 47 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

When the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni unfolded the aforesaid essence, it has induced **extremely auspicious wonderful fruitions** of requital for the many listeners on the spot. In Volume Two on the “Requital of Gratitude Section 2” [0300c14] of the “**Mahâyâna Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**”, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni has propagated that (in **modern terminologies**): [Upon hearing from the Lord Buddha this method for requiring the gratitude **which they had never heard before**, the five hundred elderly people (in modern language, it means “several hundreds of Dharma practitioners who have learnt Buddhism for a long time”) had aroused ever in their minds such enthusiastic passions in seeking to attain the “**Most Supreme Bodhi: Most Supreme Enlightenment**”, that is the aspiration for “attaining perfect enlightenment”. Because of this, they immediately achieved the “**Forbearance Samadhi**” (*Note 1).

By using this “mental concentration” of “the Meditation of Endurance”, they entered into the state of “**Inconceivable Wisdom**”, in which they would never retrogress or lose such kind of a wisdom. At that time, the 84,000 (i.e. “tens of thousands” in modern language) sentient beings at the assembly had induced their “**Awakened Minds**” (“**Bodhicitta**” in Sanskrit) and obtained strong and firm faith. Together with the remaining **large number of Bodhisattvas** who had gathered in this “**Ocean of meditative magnetic field**” by virtue of their “**Samadhi: Mental Concentration**”, they had all achieved the “**Vajrasamadhi of Endurance**” (“**Vajra**” means **indestructible, invincible, firm and strong**”), and realized both the “**Anutpattika-Dharma-Ksanti**” (**Note 2) and the “**Anulomiki-Dharma-Ksanti**” (**Note 3).

Or in realizing the spiritual accomplishment of the “**First Ground**” (“**Bhumi**”) to attain the “**Endurance of Non-Arousal**”. (“**Endurance of Non-Arousal**”: is a kind of “**Endurance: Mental concentration**” which does not give rise or arouse any grossly serious afflictions). Countless sentient beings have thus aroused their “**Bodhicitta**”, and rested peacefully in the “**non-retrogressive state of Bodhicitta**”. At that time, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni told the five hundred elders that: “For all sentient beings in the future world, if there are people who, upon hearing this “**Mind Ground Visualization on the Requital of the Four Kinds of Gratitude**”, come to **accept and hold onto, recite and chant, learn and study, explain and interpret, write down for wide-spread circulations** of these methods, the virtuous merits and wisdom of these people will grow. They will be guarded and protected by various heavenly virtuous gods, and that they will have no bodily illnesses in this present world, and enjoy an extended life-span.

At the time of their death, these people will immediately be reborn into the “**Inner Court of the Tusita Heaven**”. If they are able to see any Buddhas with the “**white urna curl that emits light between eyebrows**” in this Heaven (one of the special characteristics of a Buddha), then they can transcend this phenomenon of Life and Death, without being



subject to the sufferings of the cycle of life and death, as they have fully understood how to handle and master the situations of life and death without fears. During the time when Bodhisattva Maitreya descends into this world to manifest his attainment of the “perfect enlightenment” (i.e. the attainment of “buddhahood”), and launches the “Three Assemblies under the dragon flower (naga-puspa) trees” in propagating the Holy Dharma, these people can then be reborn concurrently into such environment to participant in the “Three Assemblies under the dragon flower (naga-puspa) trees”.

At the assemblies, these people would be released from the shackles of having only to take rebirths in the worldly realms, thus freeing themselves from the “cycle of karmic existence of the mundane world”. They can be reborn in any of the “Pure Lands” in ten directions at their own will. In these “Pure Lands”, they can see the Buddhas, listen to their Buddhist teachings, and enter into the assemblies to learn the “Right Meditation”. From practising the “Right Meditation”, they can “concentrate their minds” in the “Right Samadhi” to speedily acquire the wisdom of the “Anuttara- Samyak-Sambodhi Tathagata : the Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightened Buddha”.

Would One Still Be Reborn Again After Entry Into the “Pure Land”?



The word “liberation” is often being **misunderstood** as the “attainment of Buddhahood”, or being permanently free from the constraints of the “karmic forces”. Such a **harmful misunderstanding** would make Dharma practitioners go astray easily. In fact, the word “liberation” carries different interpretations and have different meanings under different environments and different circumstances. In simple terms, it means “to get **liberated and released** from plights”.

The above scripture is often misunderstood to mean that when one is able to be reborn into the “Inner Court of the “Tusita Heaven” where Bodhisattva Maitreya dwells, one can then “escape from the cycles of life and death” without having to take rebirths again. This passage points out very clearly that **those persons who have been reborn will still need to be reborn again**. The reason is that Bodhisattva Maitreya has **not yet “achieved Buddhahood”**, and that the “Tusita Heaven” is only one of the “six Heavens in the Desire Realm” which belongs to a **lower tier** of the “Heavenly Realms”, and is **still rather different from a “Pure Land”**.

A “Pure Land” refers to the heavenly realm that was **stationed by a Buddha** who uses the Buddhist powers to **temporarily** shield off and block away the karmic tractions of all other sentient beings, such that those sentient beings who are reborn there can learn the Buddhist Dharma at ease and practice them. Unless those sentient beings who were there do not want to stay behind **of their own accord**, otherwise they would not take rebirths elsewhere in the lower planes without reasons. Those sentient beings whose **evil karmas or worldly minds** are not light are known as those taking **“rebirths to the Pure Land with karmas”**. They will be **trapped inside the lotuses** as strict retreat sessions, so as to practise the Holy Dharma until their minds have been purified. In the meantime, in order to ensure their safety, they are being protected (**within the lotuses**) against possible downfalls to be reborn in other lower realms within the cycle of karmic existence. Only after having purified their minds will the lotuses start to “blossom for them to be able to see the Buddhas”, and to get released from the previous adversities.

As recorded in many of the scriptures and sutras, those sentient beings who are **situated in the “Heavenly Realms” and the “Pure Lands” are all required to take rebirths at the end of their limited life-spans**. These sentient beings must strive to work hard in their Dharma practice, in order to **elevate their rebirths to higher tiers**, so as to be reborn again to the “Pure Lands”. If the level of the “Pure Land” in which they are reborn is too low, there is still the risks of natural disasters. It is because the “Heavenly Realms”, with the majority of the “Pure Lands” located therein, would be destroyed due to natural disasters. For example, as stated in the **“Aggañña Sutta”**, “The Lord Buddha told the bhikshus that there are three Cataclysms in the world. What are they? The first one is the Fire Cataclysm, the second one is the Flood Cataclysm, and the third one is the Wind Cataclysm..... the Three-thousand Large Thousand-fold Worlds.....will all be completely burnt out without anything left behind.”

To explain this in modern scientific terms, the Fire Cataclysm refers to the Big Band, the Flood Cataclysm refers to the “water current-like” hitting impacts of the debris and magnetic airstreams caused by the explosions, while the Wind Cataclysm refers to the airflow storms and residual explosions caused by the atmospheric pressures. The “Fire Cataclysm Mutation” can burn from the “Hells Realm” all the way up to the highest of the “Second Dhyana



Heaven” (“[Prathamad-dhyana Bhumi](#)” in Sanskrit) in the “Form Realm”. The “Flood Cataclysm Mutation” can burn from the “Hells Realm” up to the highest of the “Third Dhyana Heaven” in the “Form Realm”. The “Wind Cataclysm Mutation” can burn from the “Hells Realm” up to **certain parts** of the “Fourth Dhyana Heaven” in the “Form Realm”. Only those **highest levels of heavens** in the “Fourth Dhyana Heaven”, that is, those “Heavenly Realms” above that of the “Asamjnisattvah Heaven”, can thus avoid these disasters.

There is no Buddhas’ protective net in the “Inner Court of Tushita”, nor are there any Buddhas’ personal teachings on the “Right Meditation”. Bodhisattva Maitreya is still striving hard in trying to comprehend on the “Right Meditation”. The “Right Meditation” refers to “a hundred percent **correct**, accurate, unbiased, and well-balanced awareness **equivalent** to the **correct**, precise and exact intrinsic nature of **enlightenment**”. Thus, this is known as the “Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment” in its short form. When one is able to enter into the “Right Meditation”, one can then “attain perfect enlightenment”, that is, the state of having restored one’s enormous powers of the “Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment” of the “intrinsic nature”.

As Bodhisattva Maitreya is trapped in an **“illusory ignorance of beginning-less time”**, he is unable to enter into the “Right Meditation”. Thus, even though his achievement in Dharma practice has already reached the level above that of the **“Tenth Ground”** (“[Bhumi](#)”), he is still unable to cross over this “illusory ignorance of beginning-less time” in order to enter into the “Right Meditation” at the level of the “Eleventh Ground”. He only belongs to an **“Equivalent Enlightened Bodhisattva”** (“[samasama sambodhi](#)” in Sanskrit) level of the “Tenth-and-a-half Ground”, and thus cannot be truly regarded as a “Buddha” (“[the Fully Enlightened One](#)”). An “illusory ignorance of beginning-less time” refers to a kind of **“non-illuminated and ignorant** attachment to most subtle and minute **illusions** that exist ever **since time immemorial**”). “Ignorance” means “foolishness and stupidity”, which can only be removed and eradicated by the three elements of **“Mental Concentration, Wisdom and Light”**, which are “interdependent and co-existing” products coming from one’s **practical Dharma practices**. As such, Bodhisattva Maitreya must have to undergo such processes of practical Dharma practices in order to get breakthroughs. It is impossible to break away and resolve this kind of ignorance by just studying the doctrines and principles through their different comprehensions, and this is exactly where Bodhisattva Maitreya **must have to transcend** beyond his limitations.

In order to **remedy** this area of deficiency, Bodhisattva Maitreya needs to dwell in the “Inner Court of the Tushita Heaven”, teaching and inspiring the



divine beings in heaven on the one hand, while practising and further upgrading to enter into the “Right Meditation” on the other hand. It is until the “causes and conditions are ripen and matched together” that Bodhisattva Maitreya would then descend to the Human Realm for one more time to practise and enter into the “Right Meditation”, in order to “achieve full enlightenment” (i.e. to attain “Buddhahood”). This is known as the “Bodhisattva in taking up a Buddha’s place in his next life” (“Eka-jati-pratibaddha -bodhisattva” in Sanskrit), meaning the bodhisattva who needs to take rebirth for one last time in order to recover his total wisdom before being able to attain “perfect enlightenment of Buddhahood”. Why it is so? It is because in taking rebirth one more time in the Human Realm is equivalent to having a “brainwash” that would wash away all the past memories and ignorance, such that Bodhisattva Maitreya would be able to practise the “Right Meditation” under the “Dragon-flower Tree” (Nagapuspa Tree) in a most refreshing, non-attached state of wisdom, so as to enable him to attain the “ultimate and perfect enlightenment” to become a Buddha.

As recorded, the lifespan of Bodhisattva Maitreya is 4,000 heavenly years (about 5.76 billion years in the Human Realm). When his lifespan comes to an end, then Bodhisattva Maitreya will descend into the Human Realm in order to undergo the “Eight Aspects of A Buddha’s Life”. As expounded in Volume 7 of Sramana Zhiyi’s “Four Doctrines” and Volumes 1 to 4 of the “Accounts of Lord Buddha Shakyamuni”, the “Eight Aspects of A Buddha’s Life” refer to: Descent from the Tusita Heaven, Entering the Mother’s Womb, Taking Birth, Renunciation and Ordination as a Monk, Suppression and Subjugation of Mara, Attainment of Full & Perfect Enlightenment, Turning the Dharma Wheel, and Entering into Nirvana. All of these cover a total of eight different stages.

Upon attaining “Buddhahood”, Bodhisattva Maitreya will then greatly turn the Wheel of the Holy Dharma in launching the “Three Great Assemblies under the Nagapuspa Tree” to propagate the Buddhist teachings. The duration of one day and night in the “Tushita Heaven” is equivalent to 400 years in the Human Realm, and thus their 360 days of one year are equivalent to 144,000 human years. The divine beings in the Tushita Heaven have a lifespan of 4,000 years, which are equivalent to 5.676 billion years in the Human Realm. (Section 861 in Volume 31 of the “Samyuktagama Sutra”).

Anyone being born here (in the Tushita Heaven) can enjoy long life, but that does not mean that one can forever be “freed and liberated from the cycle of life and death” without having to take a rebirth. One must achieve “Buddhahood of full enlightenment” before one can possess the powers and abilities to enter into the “Dharma Realm”. Only by entering into the “Dharma Realm” would one be able to really get rid of any constraints from any “karmic forces”. Therefore, the above scripture has pointed out the need for one to have the favourable conditions to be able to see the “white curl that radiates lights between the eyebrows of any of the Buddhas” before one can acquire the knowledge and wisdom on the “liberation from the cycle of life and death”.



A Buddha has a total of 32 special physical characteristics. The characteristic of having “white curl emitting lights” is one of them. The white hair between the eyebrows of a Buddha, which curls in clockwise direction, glazes inside and outside like a piece of white glass. The white hair between the eyebrows is like the sun in the centre that emits bright lights. It is 5 feet long at birth time, and 1 zhang and 5 feet long upon the attainment of full enlightenment (1 zhang equals to 10 feet). This is known as the “White Curl Look”. As quoted in Volume 31 of the “Maha-prajnaparamita Sutra”: “The Lord Buddha has White Curl Look between eyebrows, soft and curling in clockwise direction like cotton.....”. In the “Amitayur-dhyana Sutra”, it is also cited that: “the white curl turns right-hand side between eyebrows like the five Mount Sumeru.” In the preface of the “The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Law” (“Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra” in Sanskrit), it is stated that “The Buddha radiates lights from the white curl between his eyebrows, shining upon eighteen thousand numbers of worlds in the East”.

When the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni was giving sermons, such kind of bright lights were sometimes emitted, and it was about 5 feet long. Upon attaining “Buddhahood”, the lights became much strongly illuminated at 1 zhang and 5 feet long with its coverage up to 18,000 numbers of worlds (meaning tens of thousands of worlds). The characteristic of having “white curl emitting lights” as mentioned in the above Sutras means that there are many Buddhas who would sometimes go to the “Inner Court of the Tushita Heaven” to give sermons. Sometimes, some of these Buddhas would emit this kind of white curl bright lights while preaching their sermons. Thus, whosoever is bestowed with the virtuous merits and causal conditions to be able to witness such kind of lights will be able to acquire the knowledge and wisdom on the “liberation from the cycle of life and death”.

Even when one has acquired such knowledge and wisdom, one still needs to descend afterwards and to be reborn into the Human Realm alongside with Bodhisattva Maitreya to participate in the “Three Assemblies under the Nagapuspa Tree”, before one can continue with one’s Dharma practices to learn and practise on the “Right Meditation” for entry into the “Pure Land”. It is because without knowing the “Right Meditation”, it is impossible for one to enter into the “Unsurpassed, Well-Balanced and Equally-Abiding, Complete and Perfect Enlightenment” in attaining “Buddhahood”. The path for one to go would then be quite sluggish and long-winding.

Many people have misunderstood that, so long as one is able to participate in the “Three Assemblies under the Nagapuspa Tree” as an attendee, one will then be reborn in the “Pure Land” without having to practise the Holy Dharma, and they even regard this as an “unchanging fact”. This is impossible, and also violates the “Law of Causes and Effects”, as well as the principle that “no worldly matter is perpetually unchanging”. Even Bodhisattva Maitreya has to practise the Holy Dharma before he can attain the fruition of “Perfect Enlightenment”, not to mention all other sentient beings?

There are also some sentient beings who said that one can be reborn in the “Inner Court of the Tushita Heaven” to enjoy heavenly bliss simply by chanting a few times of “Namo Bodhisattva Maitreya” without having to do any Dharma practice, and then by further participating in the “Three Assemblies under the Nagapuspa Tree” as an attendee later on, one would become an “Arhat” without doing any Dharma practice. All these are their wrong interpretations of the



sutras and scriptures, their naive and ignorant thinking of not knowing well the “Law of Causes and Effects”, as well as the principle of “impermanence in worldly matters”. This kind of misleading thought and misguidance is sufficient enough to cause downfalls in many sentient beings’ rebirths into even worse realms of existence due to their “lack of diligence in Dharma practice and inadequate preparations”. Whosoever is promoting and disseminating such kind of erroneous thinking will endanger and harm countless sentient beings, and the evil karmic retributions due to them will be extremely miserable.

Therefore, the best way of “interdependent origination” remains to be the training and practising of the “Right Meditation” here and now, to train and practise at the present time the methods that one can get a direct rebirth into the “Pure Land”. If one does not have the suitable conditions to follow these “Gurus”, one can follow the instructions of the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni by accepting and holding onto, reciting and chanting, learning and studying, explaining and interpreting, writing down for wide-spread circulations on the “Mahayan Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation”, which would be much better off than getting a downfall in one’s rebirth in other realms of existence. (Regarding the teachings on the “Right Meditation”, please see Episodes 4 and 5 of the DVDs on “The Essence of Practising Tibetan Buddhism – Series on the Posthumous World”. Please also view the multimedia publications published by the Dudjom Buddhist Association, or have a look at the YouTube channel of the Dudjom Buddhist Association: <http://www.youtube.com/user/DudjomBuddhist>).

The several types of “endurances” as mentioned in the above scripture refer to certain levels of “mental concentration”. Among these, the “Five Endurances” are as follows:

1. **Endurance in Subdueness** – For those Dharma practitioners who make a bodhisattva vow at the beginner stage, they need to subdue their minds in order to bear with the good and adverse situations. This is the “Mental concentration on subduing the mind”;
2. **Endurance in Confidence** – This is a kind of mental concentration built upon one’s firm confidence with strong belief and determination;
3. **Endurance in Meekness** – The ability to subdue one’s mind has reached a certain level that one is able to endure naturally any situations and conditions, without having to suppress hardly one’s emotions. At this time, one’s mind becomes gentle, soft, virtuous and smooth. It is known as the “Mental concentration on meekness”;
4. **Endurance of Non-birth** – Those in this holy position have thorough understanding on the principle that everything is “non-existent (non-birth) by itself”. All beings with either conscience, or without conscience, have their appropriate causes and conditions for their existences. They have “no self-existence” of their own, and their true forms are “emptiness”. Therefore, their enduring minds do not waive and remain calm within this “Law of Non-Existence”, in order to personally accomplish this kind of “Mental concentration of ‘Non-Existence’”;
5. **Endurance on the Stillness of Extinction** – Saintly persons in the Resultant position have achieved complete realization of the state on the “Stillness of extinction of Nirvana”, meaning that they have possessed the “Mental concentration of the ‘Right Meditation’” which will enable them to gain entry into the “Dharma Realm”.

..... (To be Continued).



***Note 1:** “The “Forbearance Samadhi” is “the Meditation of Endurance” which refers to one’s calm endurance and patience in the midst of worldly filths without being disturbed or contaminated, while understanding and knowing that worldly glories and disgrace should not be attached to, and becomes determined to abandon this filthy world by adopting the meditational method of Dharma practice. This firm and unshakable mind is known as the “Forbearance Samadhi: the Meditation of Endurance”, which means “the attainment of strong and steadfast mental concentration (meditational power) to abandon and leave this world through one’s endurance of the worldly shame”.

****Note 2:** “Anutpattika-Dharma-Ksanti” (also known as “Endurance of Non-Birth”) : To realize and understand thoroughly that everything in the world is formed by the principle of “interdependent origination”, and that nothing is “born by itself”, or to be eternal without any changes. All of them are “non-birth” in nature: not self-arisen, nor self-born by its own nature“. All these are only the formation and dissolution of a conglomeration of causes and conditions. As such, one can remain in the state of “endurance: to stay calm with an undisturbed mind”, and have no arousal of any afflictions, doubts or anxieties. As such, they can then go further to practise and realize even higher wisdoms and spiritual realizations.

*****Note 3:** “Anulomiki-Dharma-Ksanti” (“Endurance of Meekness”): Having realized that all worldly matters are formed by the “arising and ending of appropriate causes and conditions”, which have no “self-nature” of their own, one should find no cause for arousal of one’s afflictions in worldly matters, and thus can go along in accords with the conditions in one’s Dharma practices. Hence, one’s inner mind would become soft and meek, not vexed nor agitated, thus enabling one to develop one’s “Endurance: Mental concentration” for the realization of higher levels of wisdom and spiritual realizations.

(Notes:

1. The newly released book on “The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (1)” has already been published. The content includes the articles on “The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice” from Issues No. 1 to 10 of the “Lake of Lotus”.
2. The newly released book on “The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (2) - Seven Methods of Strengthening One's Mind to Counteract Adversities” has already been published. The content includes the articles on “The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice” from Issues No. 11 to 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”.
3. The newly released book on “The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice (3) - One of the Pivotal Points in Practising the Holy Dharma: The Mysteries and Usage of the Mantras and Sounds” has already been published. The content includes the articles on “The Wisdom in Directing One's Dharma Practice” from Issues No. 21 to 30 of the “Lake of Lotus”.)



Synopsis of Each Chapter

The Skills in the Setting-up of “Plans”

The Primary condition for “success” is the setting-up of an “objective” (please refer to Issue 2 of the “Lake of Lotus”). In the setting-up of an objective with regards to one’s preference, capability and ideal, to be supplemented with the skills in the setting-up of an “objective” (please refer to Issue 3 of the “Lake of Lotus”), a blueprint of grandeur for the ideal of one’s life has more or less been drawn up. Then, what is the next step to proceed in order to ensure success “in achieving the objective”?

The next step is to draw up a detailed and concrete “plan” which is also strategic and efficient in nature. To work out a series of “plans” for the major, medium-term and small objectives is like the building up of a network of interconnected highways which would eventually lead to “success”. In designing the numerous “plans”, attention must be paid to the following items:

Complementarity and the Enhancement of Effectiveness: The links between “plans” should have compatible, complementary and interdependent effects.....(please refer to Issue 4 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

A thorough elimination process to decide what to “adopt and abandon”: Irrespective of working out major, medium-term and small “plans”, there must be a process to prioritize and eliminate with regards to some designated elements and conditions. A thorough elimination process to determine what to “adopt and abandon”.

Designated Elements & Conditions in Determining What to “Adopt and Abandon”

- (i) **Importance:** To what extent would the “plan” help in achieving the “objective”? To what extent would this “objective”, in which one is prepared to achieve, help in achieving the major objective”?.....(please refer to Issue 5 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (ii) **The Price to be Paid:** Life is short and limited. All the resources that you presently possess could be lost at any moment. One must clearly understand the characteristics of the “Combination of Resources” and its relations with Destiny in one’s own life before making any changes, to realize the price that one has to pay for the different “plans”, and then go through the processes of elimination and deployment in order to “adopt and abandon” in these various “plans”. In this way, this would enable the limited resources to become “ever-renewing, inexhaustible and of unusual value for money” within a limited framework of time and space..... (please refer to Issue 6 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (iii) **Strength and Weakness:** Every person has his/her own strengths, merits, skills, as well as his/her weaknesses and the Achilles’ heel (weakest point). In order to achieve success of any “objective” or of any “plan”, one



must be very clear of one's own strengths and weaknesses; and then through various skillful arrangements, try to complement and make use of one's strengths and weaknesses **in designing the contents and procedures of the "plans"**. This is an "important strategy" in eliminating and deploying the "plans", and thus should not be underestimated.....(please refer to Issue 7 of the "Lake of Lotus").

- (iv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (1):** In drawing up any "plan", one must take into account the "planning of time". The "principles for the usages and wastages of time" must be clear, and have to be linked up with the effectiveness of the "plan". Hence, **time should be spent on those "plans" which are most effective and can bring the highest rate of return**. One should prioritize one's different "plans" according to the long or short durations of time used and their relative effectiveness. "Plans" that require one to put in a lot of time and effort, but with low rates of return and low effectiveness, should be scrapped. One should refine and improve one's "plans" by making reference to the "principles for the usages and wastages of time". This is a **major direction** in the selecting, eliminating and refining process of one's "plans".....(please refer to Issue 8 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (v) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (2):** Due to the simple fact that one has only very limited time and energy in one's lifetime, and if one's own objective is either to be "liberated from the cycle of transmigration" (known as "Samsara" in Sanskrit), or to attain "full enlightenment" ("Buddhahood") within this very life, then your "planning of time" and the "principles for the usages and wastages of time" for this life will become one of the critical points in determining whether you would succeed or fail. Hence one must be **very cautious and rational** about this. If your objective is "to be reborn into the Buddha's Pure Land" within this lifetime, then you would have had **greater flexibility in the handling of** your "planning of time" and the "principles for the usages and wastages of time", but they still should **not be neglected**. Hence, what will be the most wise and effective way in the "planning of time" for one's life while one is on the path for Dharma practice?.....(please refer to Issue 9 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (vi) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (3):** Does it mean that if one is unable to undergo "long-term retreat", one would not be able to achieve the "objective" to become "liberated from Samsara or in attaining Buddhahood within this lifetime"? If you want to know the answer, please answer the following three questions first and to know about the "three essential factors" in the application of Buddhist teaching in our "Daily Living"..... (please refer to Issue 10 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (vii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (4): Wrong "Planning of Time":** It is no easy matter at all for one to be able to master the keys to success of "Dharma Practices" in one's "daily living" in order to have achievements, as well as to be able to achieve the "objective" of becoming "liberated from Samsara or in attaining Buddhahood within this lifetime". Even if one does possess the three best conditions (please refer to Issue 10 of the "Lake of Lotus"), it will still be unavoidable that one can fall prey and become lost again in this "tidal sea of sorrow in Samsara", as one goes through this **undulated waves of ever-changing life cycle**. If one tries not to fall again, and instead wants to further consolidate upon one's own foundation, one of the best methods is to **merge one's own "Dharma practices" into one's "daily living"** so as to ensure one's mastering of the "Planning of Time".

No matter in the setting of what kinds of "plans", one has to try and predict what would be the outcomes that would be brought upon you by this "plan"? What will be the side-effects and how many? One always hopes



for the best but be prepared for the worst. Many a Dharma practitioners, when planning the times for their “Dharma practices”, will tend to **take care of one but then lose hold of the others**, making it more contradictory, and also more confusing, for one’s own “daily living”, and thus ending in the **loss of what to “adopt and abandon”**.....(please refer to the Issue 11 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

- (viii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (5): The “Planning of Time” in One’s “Daily Living” (1) -- Linking up by the Main Theme, and Getting Through the Sequences of Events:** How can the “planning of time” in one’s “daily living” **be designed** so as to avoid the various wrong doings? How should we practice the “Holy Dharma” so as to make the “effectiveness of Dharma practices during meditation” be linked up and **steadily sustained** with that in “post-meditation daily living” so as to further it and let it become **fully “developed”**? If one wants the “success” to be speed up, how should it be planned so as to **remove those obstacles** that will hinder the “effectiveness”? How can the **sequence** of incidents to be traced out of those confusions, and the **key** positions to be found in solving the problems? How can a consensus be reached between one’s “cognitions” and “reality” so that the **“contradictions” can be resolved**? How can the **“devotion, pure state of mind and dedication”** of Dharma practices “during meditation” be linked up and be sustained with that in the “post-meditation daily living” with a **correct “state of mind”**?(please refer to the Issue 12 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (ix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (6): The Skilful Usages of the “Main Theme” and the “Sequences of Events”:** The **“cardinal mentality”** is the major key in deciding on all things, and so the **“planning of one’s Dharma practices”** in one’s “daily living” has to use the “cardinal mentality” as the “main theme” to link up the “static states of Dharma practices” with the “dynamic states of Dharma practices”, by connecting their “common points” so as to get through the rigid dichotomy in one’s “planning of time,” and thus opening and tidying up the disordered “sequences of events” in order to synergize the contradictions of these two and to make them to become complementary to each other, while using the “cardinal mentality” as the basis all through. This is, indeed, the **“main points of planning”** for one’s Dharma practices in “daily living”. Yet, how one focuses on the **“cardinal mentality”** and the **“planning of time”** would become the **main key points for one’s “successes and/or failures”**.....(please refer to the Issue 13 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (x) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (7): Flexibility in the Using of One’s “Mentality” for One’s Dharma Practice:** While practicing the Dharma during the undulated waves of “daily living”, one can hardly sustain one’s “meditational power” and the **degree of the steadiness** of one’s “Dharma practice” by **relying solely on “Emptiness”**. In order to be able to continuously enhance and elevate one’s Dharma practice in “daily living”, one must have **to adopt “Emptiness” as the unchanging and everlasting “cardinal mentality”**. One further needs to flexibly make use of the “three main essential points” of one’s Dharma practice in “daily living” so as to **train one’s own “mind”** in addressing the problems of one’s “daily living”, as well as to transform one’s “emotions and feelings” in becoming the “driving force for one’s Dharma practice”.....(please refer to the Issue 14 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xi) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (8): Criteria for “Dharma Practices in Times of Adversities” (1):** In the undulated journey in the course of one’s lifetime, it is **unavoidable** that one would meet with many adversities. If you encounter these adversities and could not handle them properly, they would become the **obstacles** to all of your plans and objectives. Regardless of what “time and effectiveness” that you may have,



they would be **completely** disturbed and delayed, and would hardly function properly. Thus, when one can skillfully adopt the strategy of getting through the obstacles by linking up the “Main Theme and the Sequences of Events”, and when one has set up the principles for **choosing** one’s “Cardinal Mentality” and also for the “Three Essential Factors” within one’s “mind”, one should at the same time follow the criteria for one’s “Dharma practices in times of adversities” as the **procedures for handling the situations**.....(please refer to the Issue 15 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

- (xii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (9): Criteria for “Dharma Practices in Times of Adversities” (2):** Among the criteria for “Dharma Practices in times of Adversities”, one should pay attention and **adhere** to the following **procedures**: 1) to alienate from one’s role; 2) to remain calm; 3) to analyze accurately; 4) to act within one’s own capacities – this can be regarded as the “time planning for one’s Dharma practice during adversities”; 5) to take advantage of the different circumstances; 6) to learn from one’s own experiences; and 7) to elevate one’s own awareness, with particular reference to 3) to analyze accurately.....(please refer to the Issue 16 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xiii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (10): Criteria for “Dharma Practices in Times of Adversities” (3):** In times of favorable circumstances, it would be easy for one to achieve success regardless of what one does. One would **naturally** be successful without having to wait for the right opportunities, neither does one have to make any planning. This is because this will be the time for **the arrival of the “achieved rewards”**. The good deeds that you have accumulated in the past are the best planning for the “achieved rewards.” However, in times of adversities, no matter what one does, one would have encountered many obstacles and have one’s head badly battered. If one simply goes along naturally, it would lead one to a dead end. This is because, in times of adversities, it is the time **for the coming of one’s retributions due to one’s past bad deeds**. If one does not remain calm, wait for the right opportunity, and plan appropriately, it would be difficult for one to get out from the plight. The question, then, is **when will be the best time** to get out from the plight? And what would be considered as the **appropriate planning**.....(please refer to the Issue 17 of the “Lake of Lotus”)?
- (xiv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (11): Criteria for “Dharma Practices in Times of Adversities” (4) – Making use of the Circumstances:** The characteristics for being in adversities are that one would be **beset with difficulties and will be unable to cope with the situations**. If one has to make use of the circumstances of that particular situation and time so as to break through the obstacles is basically an **extremely difficult matter to achieve**. Since it is **all that difficult**, the conditions that one would have to consider in order to complement the whole situation would be particularly even more so. There is an old Chinese saying that “Hero makes the trend of his time, and the trend of the time makes its own Hero”. After all, ‘the trend of the time and the environment’ together is one of the major elements for one’s success and failure. Hence, it is also **a necessary element** for one to get out from the plight by making use of the circumstances to break away from adversities. If one is to make use of the circumstances, one would adopt one of the following situations: (1) to **quietly wait** for the favourable circumstances to arise; (2) to **make use of** the existing circumstances; and (3) to **build up** favourable circumstances.....(please refer to the Issue 18 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (12): Criteria for “Dharma Practices in Times of Adversities”(5) -- Learn One’s Lessons from Past Experiences:** Failure is not necessarily a miserable thing. It can only be said as a blueprint which reflects on a series of **merits and weaknesses**. If one can learn one’s lessons



well from past experiences in finding out the “reasons for one’s failures, as well as the **personal behavioral formulae** that led to such failures”, one’s “**wisdom of self-enhancement**” will be elevated by applying proper remedies to revise these **extremely concealed** and improper formulae, this would help to bring about one’s success in the next occasion. During this process of “self-enhancement”, it would enable one to live more happily and to have a direction, to have more meanings and values, and to be more proactive. In this way, what one would regard as failures have, in fact, now been changed into successes, and have brought about the essential elements for one’s future successes. The “state of invincibility” is the most lonely and painful experience. Too many successes and for too long will only make one to lose one’s sense of direction, and to easily lose oneself in one’s own “ego”. As such, one **would not be able to find out and revise the poor formulae**, and oneself would thus be easily bogged down in the mire of having too much “self-pride” and strong “arrogance” within one’s own “ego”, never being able **to see the real world in its totality**. In this regard, such kind of continuous successes can only be said to be **an extremely big failure.....(please refer to the Issue 19 of the “Lake of Lotus”)**.

- (xvi) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (13): Criteria for “Dharma Practices in Times of Adversities” (6) – Enhancing One’s Awareness:** Many a times the formation of one’s mistakes and failures are due to the inadequacy of one’s own “awareness”. The biggest drawback was one’s own failure lied in not “being aware” of what and where had gone wrong in one’s own “behavioral formulae”. This would result in one’s repeating, or even expanding, of one’s mistakes and failures endlessly. Being faulty or carelessness for a short while is not the main cause for one’s mistakes and failures. **The main and real cause is the existence of deviations and defects in both the consciousness and the subconscious of one’s own “behavioral formulae”**. This would lead to a chain of wrong behaviors, which would form **an orbit which would lead to further failures, and that one would find it hard to depart from it**. Along with this orbit of failures, it would further extend to many more faults and carelessness, and the end result would be more and greater failures. Hence, to “enhance one’s awareness” is not only to elevate one’s attentiveness, such that the frequency of one’s making mistakes due to carelessness would be reduced, but the more important aspect is whether to have the ability for one’s “self-reflection”, for observing the minute details, and to carefully find out the deviations and defects in one’s own “behavioral formulae”.....(please refer to the Issue 20 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xvii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (14): Simplifying the Complexities, Finding the Keys** - Due to the fact that one’s life span is **temporary and impermanent**, and so when one design and draw up a plan for one’s own Dharma practice, one should need to include the “factor of time and effectiveness”, all the more, as **the primary important point for one’s consideration**. Apart from having the “right mindset and criteria” in handling periods of “adversities or prosperities” so that one would be able to “master the factor of time” more accurately and to have **an edge, what other principles that one should need to pay attention to?** No matter what kinds of the “planning of time” that one has, they are bound to have both strengths and weaknesses. It is unavoidable that there will be some faults. However, the appropriate “planning of time” should be able to reduce or lighten all kinds of faults and be able to speed up the process in the showing of “success”. **An appropriate “planning of time” must make use of the following principles in its design:** 1. **Linking up by the Main theme, and getting through the sequences of events** – target: daily living before one’s death (please refer to Issue 21 of “Lake of Lotus”); 2. **Simplifying the complexities, finding the keys** – target: the wrestling ground of energies after one’s death; 3. **Differentiation on the order of importance, Proper handling of the interferences** –target: the wrestling ground of energies after one’s death.....(please refer to Issue 21 of “Lake of Lotus”).



- (xviii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (15): Mastering of Time and Choice of Methods** – Irrespective of the objectives of one's Dharma practice, one must choose the appropriate "methods of Dharma practice" that **correspond with one's objectives**. The amount of **time spent** on these "methods of Dharma practice", and the **effects that one can achieve** through them, are the **key and critical points** as to whether or not one can achieve the objectives, and so one should analyze them in more details. In order to have a quick and accurate way to analyze and measure the various "methods of Dharma practice", one must first "bring out the chief points" on the "objectives" of the various practices, as well as the **effective elements** of the "methods of Dharma practice", before one can correspondingly discuss and analyze the issues.....(please refer to Issue 22 of "Lake of Lotus").
- (xix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (16): The Highest Objective that "Prayers" can Achieve** – On the side of effectiveness, even though they consist the element of one's "mental strength", but since "prayers" do not involve any practice on "Emptiness", and so they are neither direct enough, nor have they included any programming for the practicing of "Emptiness" that could counter-act the tractional forces of the "cycle of karmic exercise". Hence, though prayers can produce some effects, the highest level that they can achieve would only be limited to the "materialization of requests for worldly desires", or for the "rebirths in some virtuous realms". One would **not be able to achieve the two objectives of: (1) liberation from the tractional forces of the "cycle of karmic existence"; and (2) the attainment of "Complete Enlightenment" ("Buddhahood")**. Hence, "prayers" will not be able to become the major item of Dharma practice in Buddhism, and that **it can only be a supplementary method of Dharma practice**.....(please refer to Issue 23 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (xx) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (17): The Mystery of the Blessings of the Sound in the Recitations of "Mantras, Buddhas' Names or Sutras"** – The practice method of using sound to recite "mantras, names of Holy Deities, and scriptures" is one of the practice methods that have been adopted by most religions and ceremonies in this secular world. Does it consist of other deeper meanings? What are some of the effects that will be produced from this kind of practice methods? What are the degrees of influence that this has upon one's own "mental strength"? What is the highest level of objective that it can achieve? What is the length of time that it will take up in order to achieve the objective?.....(Please refer to Issue 24 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (xxi) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (18): How to Make Different Mantras to Produce Effects** – the effects and energies that are produced from the "resonance" of sound can make the "electrons" at the outer layer of the "atom" to move over to the other "atom" next to it, or else the two "atoms" can share the same "electrons". This kind of mechanism can help make "atoms" to become bondings in forming "molecules", or other types of "compounds". Through this process, **different types of materials can then be connected, consolidated and formed**. Yet, what types of pronunciation of "sounds" could match such particular effects?(Please refer to Issue 25 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (xxii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (19): What is the meaning of having received the "relevant trainings" in the recitation of mantras in order that merits would be arisen which are remarkable and vast, particularly in the enhancement of one's own wisdom which would be very significant, and would not be lost in one's numerous lifetimes?** – There are numerous mentions of the **"Dharani Samadhi"**, the **"Dharani Seal Samadhi"** and the **"one hundred and eight kinds of "Samadhis"** in the different "Buddhist Sutras", and so what are they? These are referring to the **different "Mantras" within the hundred types of "Right**



Concentrations", and so what is the mysterious rationale behind them? Should "mantras" be translated? What are the merits that can be arisen from the **"relevant trainings"** in the recitation of "mantras"?(Please refer to Issue 26 of the "Lake of Lotus").

- (xxiii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (20): How to Give Rise to the Wonderful Merits in "Pacifying/Averting Adversities" by Reciting the "Mantra Dharani"?** – There are many more conditions that need to be coordinated in order to give rise to the merits of "pacifying/averting adversities" by reciting the "Mantra Dharani", as it would involve the "collective karma" of all those who are involved, that is, the "karmas" of each and every one that would be affected by those adversities combined together. As such, it would be much more complicated than the "karma" involved in both the **"Dharma Dharani"** and the **"Meaning Dharani"**, as for the latter two only the "karma" of the Dharma practitioner himself/herself would be involved. Hence, it would be relatively much easier to give rise to the merits of both the **"Dharma Dharani"** and the **"Meaning Dharani"**, and the level of "meditational power" that is required to match these Dharani is relatively lower. On the other hand, the level of "meditational power" that is required to match the giving rise of the merits of "pacifying/averting adversities" of the **"Mantra Dharani"** would be correspondingly higher.....(please refer to the Issue 27 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (xxiv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (21): The wonderful merits of the recitation of "Endurance Dharani"** – How to generate the merits of **"Endurance Dharani"**? "Endurance" has two meanings: one represents the **"Endorsement Abler"**, and the other represents a **"Decision"**. The "Endorsement Abler" means that "after the verification and endorsement, one has been confirmed to have such an attainment". As for the "Decision", it indicates that one has "surely and profoundly realized, and has thus affirmatively achieved a certain level of attainment, in a decisive and firm manner without any doubts".....(please refer to the Issue 28 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (xxv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (22): How to set up an all-rounded protection shield** - In the **"Sutra on the Holy Names of the Buddhas"**, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni has proclaimed the Holy Names of thousands of Buddhas. If counting the compressed abbreviations, such as "Namo to the eight hundred billions of those designated Buddhas of the Second Kalpa who are having the same names with the same Dharma states" and so on, then the Holy Names of the Buddhas being mentioned are actually infinite in numbers. Hence, if all sentient beings could follow exactly what the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni has told us to recite and chant, then the causes of connections being sown with all the Buddhas could also be infinite. In the future, sentient beings could be taught by such a vast number of Buddhas, and could also receive sky-like protections from countless Buddhas and related protectors, such that it will definitely keep sentient beings away from all karmic obstacles, and certainly they will be able to practise peacefully without disasters, difficulties and hindrances, until they will finally attain Buddhahood. In other words, the recitation and chanting of the Buddhas' Holy Names is a kind of Dharma practice with the nature of "praying, being blessed and protected". Yet, it does take a longer period of time and is a bit indirect.....(please refer to the Issue No. 29 of the "Lake of Lotus").
- (xxvi) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (23): Is there any difference in reciting and chanting the "Buddhist Sutras" when one has already got the wisdom seeds in one's unconscious** - **"Buddhist Sutras"**, as ancient books and records, actually stored the boundless wisdom of the Lord Buddha. By the using of words



to show the Lord Buddha's wisdom to the world, it also wishes to let all sentient beings to truly understand the kind of wisdom that was unveiled by those words, so as to know how to apply them. Unfortunately, in achieving such kinds of results are not easy things, except for those ripe sentient beings who have the past causes and merits, and they also should have the wisdom seeds within their unconscious. Thus, even though people have been trying to abandon the ancient words, and have changed them into modern terminologies, it is still unable to make this wish come true. Yet, are there alternative ways to make this wish come true? For those who have already gotten the wisdom seeds in their unconscious and for those who do not, when reciting and chanting the **"Buddhist Sutras"**, would there be any difference between them?..... (please refer to the Issue No.30 of the "Lake of Lotus").

(xxvii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (23): What is the "evil spirit within one's own mind"?** – Many people have mentioned that the practicing of the Buddhist Dharma is to overcome our own "mind", that is, the "evil spirit within one's own mind". Actually, what has created this "evil spirit within one's own mind"? In fact, this so-called "evil spirit within one's own mind" is some kind of a bad inclination within oneself, which has been reacted upon and projected from the bad "karmic seeds" that had been sown in the "field of the eighth consciousness" in one's endless past lives. In order to overcome this "evil spirit within one's own mind", many people will come to know that it will be very difficult to depend on others, but that one should "begin with one's own mind". However, if one has only very limited knowledge, with a weak capability to resist stress, then how could one "begin with one's own mind"? (please refer to the Issue No. 31 of the "Lake of Lotus").

(xxviii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (24): How could one extend the life of a dying relative? How to use the four levels to help and save patients?** – When the signs of death of patients are shown and even unveiling that one is going to enter into the initial stage of either virtuous or evil judgment, that means even though this person has not yet formally died, he or she was already stepping into the edge at the "margin of life and death". As this is a critical position, that whether one could "recover from death, and to extend one's life" or not will have to depend upon how many merits this patient could have aroused or being induced at that very moment. (please refer to the Issue No.32 of the "Lake of Lotus").

(xxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (25) : How to directly elevate the functions and merits of one's own mind?** - Sound is a vibration with frequency. If the airflow and muscles of one's body are blown up to make the vocal cord vibrate, the sound so produced will have certain impact on the body, regardless of whether it has any meaning. This includes the impact on the spiritual level. Different degrees of sound would, of course, have different degrees of impact. Therefore, among the Buddhist practice methods, sound has been included as one of the important dimensions for its Dharma practices. What are the comprehensive merits of this kind of Dharma practice? (please refer to the Issue No.33 of the "Lake of Lotus").

(xxx) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (26): The skills of chanting need to be adjusted and changed in accordance with "the characteristics of one's habitual tendencies, features of karma, orientations of aspirations, degrees of mental concentration** - Whether the "resonant frequency" of a particular "Mantra, Buddha's Holy Name, or the Sutra" is suitable for the reciting person, whether it matches the "the characteristics of habitual tendencies, features of karmas, orientations of aspirations, degrees of mental concentrations" of the reciting person and so on is a major factor that influences the effects. If the reciting person understands his own " characteristics of habitual tendencies, features of karmas, orientations of aspirations, degrees of



mental concentrations” so well that he knows how to choose a “Mantra, Buddha’s Holy Name, or the Sutra” that is most suitable for himself to recite, then the skills of recitations will become the only major factor that influences the effects. Are there then differences in the skills for reciting the “Mantras, Buddhas’ Holy Names, or the Sutras”?..... ([please refer to the Issue No.34 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)).

- (xxxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (27): How to Use the “Sound of Mantra” to Transcend All Limitations of Dharma Practice** - “The Power of the Resonating Voice” is sufficient enough to make the long progress period of one’s Dharma practice to become a rapid achievement of goals. Why is it so? The most important key point for one’s real Holy Dharma practice is on one’s “mind training”. And the highest level of one’s “Mind” is to restore the state of **“Emptiness: Neither existence nor voidness”**. Then what is the “vibration frequency” that is closest to this state? A good mastery and application of this special “vibration frequency” is undoubtedly the “shortcut” for one to enter this state of condition. Therefore, the arising of human sounds, regardless of whether they come from the “conscious” level or from the “subconscious” level, will be extremely useful in one’s Dharma practice, if one knows how to use them.....([please refer to the Issue No.35 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)).
- (xxxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (28): The interrelationships of the sounds of the human body with one’s Dharma practice and with that of the “Consciousness” and the “Subconscious”** - Other than for the use of talking, the sounds of human beings can also be used to express emotions, such as laughter, crying, moaning, sighs, cries of grief and even yawning etc. They all have the various functions to relieve our emotions, stress and tensions. Some of them are generated as the functions of one’s “conscious” level while others are generated as the function of one’s “unconscious” level. Therefore, the origins for giving rise to the sounds of human beings can be divided into those coming from the “conscious” level and those from the “unconscious” level. Can their interrelationships render assistance to one’s Dharma practice?([please refer to the Issue No.36 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)).
- (xxxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (29): The use of the “core basic sound”. Its usefulness to sentient beings in elevating their lives and in practising the Holy Dharma** - The “core basic sound” represents the pure and natural sound of its original nature of each individual sentient being. From the physical structure to the spiritual dimension, their inter-dependence and co-existence are inseparable from the relationships on the movements of the “molecules” and “bio-energy”. Thus, the “vibration frequency” so generated will be that kind of “frequency vibration” that controls and affects the physical and mental conditions of that particular sentient being. When this kind of “frequency of vibration” expands to become sounds, this can be used to elevate both the physical and spiritual states of that particular sentient being..... ([please refer to the Issue No.37 of the “Lake of Lotus”](#)).
- (xxxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (30): Those who are able to “visualize the mind” could achieve complete liberation and swiftly attain “Buddhahood”** - Why “Visualization” is a method of Dharma practice that can mostly directly link to one’s “Nature of the Mind”? Where are the reasons and the evidences? In order to see the evidence, one should first look at what the “Buddhist’s Sutras” have to say. The **“Avatamsaka Sutra”** has mentioned: “Everything comes from the Mind”. This quote points out that the manifestation and emergence of all things are caused by the tractional forces of the “Mind”. In other words, the “Mind” is the source of everything. To catch all the thieves, one needs first to catch its chief. Therefore, in order to achieve



success in one's Dharma practice swiftly, not as slow as "ants crawling upwards from the ground", one needs to deal with the "Mind". In this regards, "Visualization" is a method of Dharma practice that can most directly link to one's "Nature of the Mind". Let us look at the following golden verses from the Buddhist Sutras that can provide us with guidelines ([as pointers](#)) towards the "Grand Boulevard of Golden Light"([please refer to the Issue No.38 of the "Lake of Lotus"](#)).

(xxxv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (31): The "Mahayana Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplations" is an important evidence for the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni's preaching on "Vajrayana" practices** – In the "**Mahayana Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplations**", the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us on the respective methods of the "Mental Visualization" through the "Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana" Dharma practices. This Sutra can be said to be a clear and simple overview of the Dharma practices on "mental visualizations". The fact that the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us in one and the same Sutra on the "mental visualizations" through the "Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana" practices is sufficient enough to be a strong and important evidence to prove against the wrong accusations from both the "Hinayana and Mahayana" that "Vajrayana" practices were "not preached by the Lord Buddha". It also testifies that the defamation from some of the "Hinayana and Mahayana" practitioners against the "Vajrayana" practices will only constitute an evil cause for their downfalls ([to the "evil realms"](#)) due to their "slandering the Lord Buddha's teachings"([please refer to the Issue No.39 of the "Lake of Lotus"](#)).

(xxxvi) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (32): What are the methods of "Mental Visualization"?** – The previous two chapters have clearly described those who are able to "visualize the mind" could achieve complete liberation and swiftly attain "Buddhahood", and this is also the important guideline in the "**Mahayan Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**". Then comes the question as to how to "visualize one's mind"? Whether it will be fine by just "visualizing" oneself as he Buddha or the "diety"? What are the contents and procedures of one's "Visualization"? In modern terminology, it is the question of how to proceed with the programming of one's "visualization" in order to be most effective? There are countless and endless methods of "visualization", and so which kinds of them are correct? To what levels of "visualization" do they belong? What kind of situations are they specifically for? How are their effectiveness being demonstrated? Are there any opposing effects, or side effects? A series of such questions are the "important points for consideration" in choosing one's method of "mental visualization". ([please refer to the Issue No.40 of the "Lake of Lotus"](#)).

(xxxvii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (33): The "Training of Mind" From the Core and Foundational Basis of One's "Awareness"** - In the "**Mahayan Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**", the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us on the "Mental Visualization" method for the "Mind Ground Visualization on the Requit of the Four Kinds of Gratitude". On the face of it, such kind of "Mental Visualization on the Requit of Gratitude" appears to be of a high degree of difficulty. Yet, in terms of meanings and principles, it is indeed extremely deep and far-reaching. In view of the high degree of difficulty, the five hundred elders who were present at that time in hearing the Lord Buddha's preaching all said in unison that "It is very difficult ([to practise](#))!", but then the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had said that this is a must. So are there any other solutions? Before further solutions are quoted, let us first look at how, apart from the "Filial Gratitude to Parents", the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had preached on the other three of "the four kinds of Gratitude", namely the



“Gratitude to all Sentient Beings, Gratitude to the King, and Gratitude to the Three Jewels”, and see whether they are also equally difficult to be repaid?.. (please refer to the Issue No.41 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

(xxxviii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (34) - What is actually the “Gratitude to the King” that needs to be repaid by sentient beings as requested by the Lord Buddha?** - The mindsets and thinking patterns of most sentient beings today in this contemporary world focus mostly on the “self-centered, free and equal” kind of “liberated, confrontational and anti-authority” behavioural programming. It seems to be an extremely difficult thing to ask them to understand what is meant by the “Gratitude to the King”, and even request them to make requital in their behaviours. Our current “century thinking” nowadays is “No king but elections”. Is this kind of thinking actually a counterbalance to what the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had said without any commonality? (please refer to the Issue No.42 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

(xxxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (35) - The “Buddha Jewel” has “Three Bodies”. What are their merits? The “Sambhogabaya (Enjoyment Body)” of a Buddha has two forms. What are their characteristics? What do the ten kinds of special “Manifested Body of a Buddha” represent?** - In Volume One on the Preface Section No.1 [0294b22] of the “**Mahayan Sutra of Mind Ground Contemplation**”, the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had enlightened us that: “Because you worldly people ‘do not visualize your own minds’ (that is not using visualization for mind training), therefore you are subject to the cycle of karmic existence endlessly, drifting and floating in the Ocean of Life and Death. As all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are able ‘to visualize Their minds’ (for mind-training), they can thus cross the Ocean of Life and Death to reach to the other shore in the Pure Land either to get liberated from the cycle of karmic existence or get entry into the “Dharma Realm”. The Buddhas of the past world, the present world and the future world all practised their Holy Dharma in this way”. From this, one can see that “Mental Visualization” is extremely important and is the only method for Dharma practice. With regard to the foundational base of “Mental Visualization”, one must first understand and repay the four kinds of gratitude and kindness, among which, the “Gratitude to the Three Jewels” can be said to be of “prime importance”. The “Gratitude to the Three Jewels” refers respectively to “the Gratitude to the Buddha Jewel, the Gratitude to the Dharma Jewel, and the Gratitude to the Sangha Jewel”. Let us first talk about “the Gratitude to the Buddha Jewel”. The “Buddhas” appear to be very perfect, unreachable and also difficult to communicate as they are very far away from the sentient beings. Then how is “the Gratitude to the Buddha Jewel” formed and how “deep” and “wide” is it? (please refer to the Issue No.43 of the “Lake of Lotus”).

(xxxx) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (36) – There are “Four Kinds” of “Dharma Jewel”. What are Their Merits? Who Are the “Gurus” of the Various Buddhas of the Worlds of the Three Times?** : Among the four kinds of gratitude and kindness, the “Dharma Jewel” is the teacher/mentor of various Buddhas of the Worlds of the Three Times. So how important is it actually? As all Buddhas have to rely on the “Dharma Jewel” to attain “Buddhahood”, then what actually are the substances of the “Dharma Jewel”? What are the efficacies of the “Dharma Jewel”, and how “deep” and “wide” is it?(please refer to the Issue No. 44 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



- (xxxix) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (37) - The Lord Buddha said that there are four kinds of “Sangha Jewel”. What are they? Are those Dharma practitioners not undergoing “Pabbajja” to be regarded as the “Sangha Jewel”? What are the real reasons for the “Sangha Jewel” to be able to save and help sentient beings?** : Among the four kinds of gratitude and kindness, the “Sangha Jewel” is the treasure that is most accessible to and easy for sentient beings to produce virtuous merits in this worldly realm. Whether or not sentient beings can benefit quickly from difficulties and miseries, whether or not they can become liberated speedily from the cycle of karmic existence, whether or not they can attain “Buddhahood” swiftly would all depend on the existence of the “Sangha Jewel”. So actually how important is the “Sangha Jewel” to the sentient beings? What actually are the substances of the “Sangha Jewel”, and how “deep” and “wide” is it?..... (please refer to the Issue No. 45 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xxxixii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (38) - The Lord Buddha said that “Jewels” have ten kinds of meanings. What are they? How could one repay the “Four Kinds of Gratitude” without affecting one’s Dharma practice on “Emptiness”?** : The Lord Buddha Shakyamuni remarked that the repayment for these four kinds of gratitude is of very high degree of difficulty! As such, would it form a kind of “attached mind” that will affect one’s Dharma practice on “Emptiness”? How could one actually practise the “Mental Visualization on the Requit of Gratitude”? The five hundred elders all said that “It is very difficult (to practise)!” , but then the Lord Buddha Shakyamuni had said that this is a must. So are there any other solutions? (please refer to the Issue No. 46 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xxxixiii) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (39) – What are the “Non-Attaining” methods for “Wonderful Mental Visualization”? What are the characteristics of Dharma practitioners endowed with the “Clarity of Dharma Eyes”?** : “Mental Visualization” is extremely important and is the only method for Dharma practice. With regard to the foundational base of “Mental Visualization”, one must first understand and repay the four kinds of gratitude and kindness. Yet the requital methods are not those that the ordinary people could generally think of by doing everything they can with their physical bodies for repayment. Instead, it is an interplay of a special “mental visualization” method with some specific behavioral actions in making the requital. This special “mental visualization” method is known as “Non-Attainment”. Then what are the “specific behavioral actions”? (please refer to the Issue No. 47 of the “Lake of Lotus”).
- (xxxixiv) **The Factors of Time and Effectiveness (40) –What Are the Fruits of Requit in Teaching Sentient Beings the “Mind Ground Visualization on the Requit of the Four Kinds of Gratitude”? Would One Still Be Born Again After Entry to the “Pure Land”?** : What are the fruits of requital for “repaying the four kinds of gratitude and kindness”? It depends on what kind of good deeds one is making since each of the fruits of requital is different. There are many kinds of virtuous actions, then actually what kind of virtuous deeds sentient beings should make to enable them to attain “Buddhahood” ultimately? The word “liberation” is often mistaken as an “attainment of Buddhahood”, or being permanently free from the containment/ restraints of “karmic forces”. Such harmful misunderstanding would make Dharma practitioners go astray easily (please refer to the Issue No. 48 of the “Lake of Lotus”).



EPILOGUE

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E-mail		Address		

* This form can be photocopied for use



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