

金聖寺

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矽谷梵音

*Pure Sound From Silicon Valley*

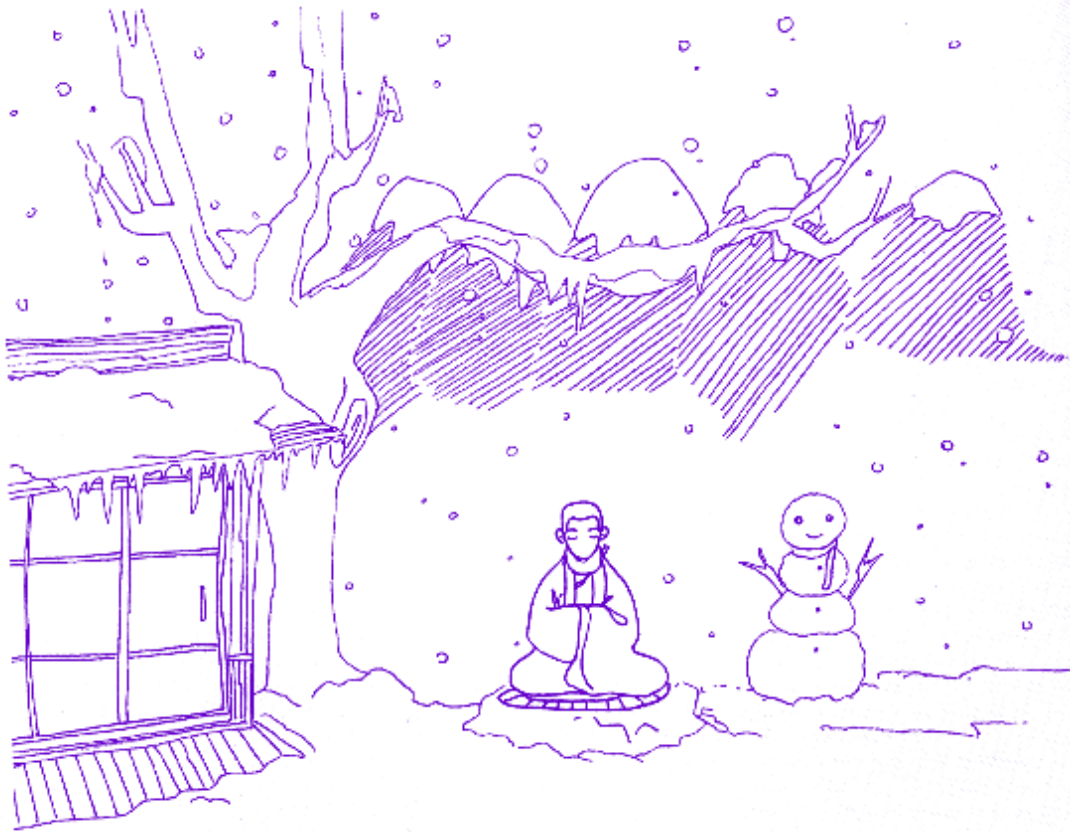
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修行人，就要修忍的功夫。  
忍熱忍寒，忍風忍雨，  
忍飢忍渴，忍罵忍打。

*Cultivators must develop patience.  
You must be able to endure heat, cold, wind, and rain.  
Be able to bear hunger, thirst, scoldings, and beatings.*

宣公上人 語錄 / by the Venerable Master Hua



不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利、不妄語

No fighting, no greed, no seeking, no selfishness, no pursuing personal advantage, and no lying.



## 要修無相的功德

### Cultivate Merit and Virtue without Marks

把妄心停下來，現出真心來修道，就有無量功德。

**If you can stop your idle thoughts and cultivate the Way with your true mind, then your merit and virtue will be measureless and boundless.**

宣公上人開示 / A talk by the Venerable Master Hua

**在** 禪堂裏是選佛的地方，是種功德福田的地方，所謂：

**若人靜坐一須臾，  
勝造恆沙七寶塔。**

爲什麼要這樣說呢？因爲在外邊所造的塔寺，是有形有相的功德。在《金剛經》上說：

**凡所有相。皆是虛妄。若見諸相非相。即見如來。**

若能靜坐片刻的時間，就有永不磨滅的功德。有人說：「那外邊的功德我不做了，我來修內邊的功德。」這種思想也是不對的。我們兩種都要做，既要修功，又要修德，到功德圓滿的時候，福慧具足，就是兩足尊了。

當知外邊所造的寺廟，經過長時間，都會變壞；所建的塔，經過劫火，也會被燒空的。唯獨靜坐，能把自性中的

佛法僧三寶修行成功，這是無漏的功德，不怕風雨，不怕劫火，永遠存在，所以無相功德，勝於有相功德千萬倍。

在禪堂裏，把妄心停下來，現出真心來修道，就有無量功德，否則就無功德。所以才說：「你能靜坐片刻的時間，就勝過造恆河沙數那樣多的七寶塔，比那功德還要大。」

各位來參加打禪七，都是有善根，才遇到這種因緣，共同來參禪。現在要把心清淨下來，不可心猿意馬，時刻不安靜，總想向外跑。那就與道不相應，浪費了七天的光陰，一無所得，辜負當初的發心。要設法控制妄念，令心靜下來，所謂：

**心清水現月，  
意定天無雲。**

**T**he Chan Hall is a place where Buddhas are selected; it's a field where we plant blessings, merit, and virtue. As the saying goes,

*If a person can sit in stillness for even an instant,  
His merit surpasses that of someone who builds as many stupas of the seven treasures as there are sand grains in the Ganges.*

Why is this so? Because temples and stupas that are built outside are visible forms of merit and virtue. The *Vajra Sutra* has a line that goes,

*All appearances are false and unreal.  
If one sees all appearances as no appearances,  
then one sees the Tathagata.*

If a person can sit in stillness for the briefest time, he creates merit and virtue which will never disappear. At this, someone may say, "I won't create any more external merit and virtue; I'm going to have only inner merit and virtue from now on." It's also wrong to think that way. In fact, you must cultivate both kinds of merit and virtue. When your merit and virtue are perfected and your blessings and wisdom are complete, you will be known as the

Doubly-Perfected Honored One.

Know, too, that any temple you can build outside will surely decay over time. Any stupa that you can erect will be burned to ashes when the fires blaze at the end of the eon. Only through Chan meditation can you successfully cultivate the Triple Jewel--the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha--of your own nature. The merit and virtue of this cultivation is "merit and virtue free of outflows." It is not endangered by the wind, the floods or fires at the eon's end, or by anything else. This is merit and virtue that lasts forever. So this kind of invisible merit and virtue surpasses visible merit and virtue by a million times over.

Here in the Chan Hall, if you can stop your idle thoughts and cultivate the Way with your true mind, then your merit and virtue will be measureless and boundless. But if you cannot do this, you'll have no merit and virtue to speak of. And so the saying goes, "If a person can sit in

stillness for even an instant, his merit surpasses that of someone who builds as many stupas of the seven treasures as there are sand grains in the Ganges."

All of us who have come to take part in this Chan Session have good roots. That's why we have the chance to come together to investigate Chan. Now we must make our minds clear and calm, and not let our thoughts run outside like mad monkeys or wild horses, or else we won't get even a moment of stillness. Then we won't have any response in the Way, and we'll have wasted seven days of time. We won't gain anything, and we will have failed to achieve what we initially resolved to do. So we must come up with a method to control our idle thoughts and settle our minds. It is said,

*When the heart is pure, the moon  
appears in the water.*

*When the mind is in samadhi, then  
there are no clouds in the sky.*

梵語禪那波羅蜜，  
此云靜慮細進參；  
山高水深無所畏，  
始知天外別有天。

*Dhyana Paramita is a  
Sanskrit term,*

*Meaning still reflection  
and subtle investigation.*

*The mountains are lofty  
and the waters are deep,  
but there is nothing to  
fear;*

*One begins to know  
that beyond this world  
is another world.*

宣公上人作  
*by the Venerable Master Hua*

## 萬佛聖城彌陀七與禪七

### ***Amitabha Buddha Recitation and Chen Meditation at CTTB***

- 萬佛聖城將於十二月十七日，舉行慶祝阿彌陀佛聖誕法會，金聖寺將安排巴士前往聖城參加，請於12月14日以前報名。

Celebration of Amitabha Buddha's Birthday at CTTB on December 17, Gold Sage Monastery will arrange bus tour for same-day travel. Please sign up before December 14.

- 12月17日至30日舉行彌陀七  
Amitabha Buddha Recitation will be from Dec. 17~ 30.

- 禪七開始於12月31日至2007年1月21日  
Chen Meditation starts from December 31, to January 21, 2007

以上活動歡迎大家踴躍參加。萬佛聖城電話：(707) 462-0939  
We would like to welcome everyone to attend the activities.

# 植佛因·解垢衣·報恩行

*Plant the Cause of Buddhahood · Remove Defilements Covering  
Our Fundamental Nature · Cultivate to Repay Kindness*



八關齋戒是一佛陀特別為在家人制定出家的戒法，  
讓我們種出世解脫的因。

*This is the Eightfold Precepts are monastic precepts proclaimed  
by the Buddha specifically for lay people, in order to let them plant  
the cause for transcending the world and attaining liberation.*

恆茂法師於2005/11/13開示於金聖寺

Dharma Talk by Dharma Master Heng Mao on Nov. 13, 2005 at GSM

英譯/袁華麗等英譯研討小組

English Translation By Huali Yuan and English Translation group



今天很高興可以在這裡  
和大家一起來學習研  
究八關齋戒。

我們先談談這個戒法的重要  
性。佛陀入涅槃以前，阿難尊者  
以四事問佛。其中一個問題就是  
請問佛說，「當佛陀在世的時候，  
我們以佛陀為導師，那佛陀  
涅槃了，我們要以誰為師呢？」  
佛陀回答：「要以戒為師。」所以，  
宣公上人傳授三皈依時，  
也要我們皈依戒，戒律是我們的  
老師。也就是說我們一言一行都  
要拿戒律做準繩，合乎戒的才去  
做，不合乎戒的就不要去做。

又佛陀在菩提樹下悟道說  
過，「奇哉！奇哉！一切眾生皆  
有佛性，只因妄想執著不能證  
得。」就是因為我們都有佛性，  
都可以成佛的。那我們現在之所

以沒能見到佛性，就是因為佛性  
被貪、瞋、癡、無明、忌妒、障  
礙所矇蔽了。那要怎樣才能見到  
這個佛性呢？也是要持戒，佛性  
乃見。我們要學戒，持戒後，佛  
性就會漸漸顯現出來。

佛陀講經三百餘會，講了四  
十九年，有三藏十二部。三藏就  
是經藏、論藏跟律藏。在這三藏  
裡，我們要學哪一藏呢？如果自  
修時間沒有那麼多的話，可以不  
用學經藏，也可以不用學論藏，  
但律藏一定要來學；否則的話，  
在我們日常行為中，我們不知道  
是做對了？還是做錯了？萬一我  
們做錯的話，那你受了五戒，你  
辯說，「我不知道我這樣做是錯  
的」。OK！那這樣子的話有兩  
條罪，一條是你做錯的那條戒律  
的本罪，然後另外還有一條不學

無知罪，所以我們現在要趕緊一  
點點來學戒。因此，今天看到大  
家好樂學戒，這是很令人歡喜讚  
歎的。

在《大方廣佛華嚴經》上有  
說，「若常信奉於諸佛，則能持  
戒修學處」。這是告訴我們修學  
的要領，一開始來學佛，首先要  
皈依三寶，相信諸佛菩薩，相信  
法，相信僧；然後，再進一步我  
們要來學習戒法，好好來持戒。

「若常持戒修學處，則能具足諸  
功德」。如果我們能夠來學習戒  
法，常常檢查自己的思想、言  
論、行為，使身口意三業清淨  
了，正定正慧才會開發，一切的  
善法功德，就在這個地方長養出  
來了。

又在優婆塞戒經說，「善男  
子，若優婆塞、優婆夷至心能受

持如是戒，是人名為優婆塞〈夷〉中分陀利華，優婆塞〈夷〉中微妙上香，優婆塞〈夷〉中真實珍寶，優婆塞〈夷〉中丈夫之人。」優婆塞，優婆夷是指我們在家人受三皈五戒後的稱呼。男眾叫優婆塞，女眾叫優婆夷。這段話的意思是說，優婆塞、優婆夷如果能夠發心來學戒，好好持戒的話，這個人就是優婆塞〈夷〉中的分陀利華，就是像分陀利花一樣那麼莊嚴。然後，他本身就是微妙上香，有那個戒香來薰，什麼地方都可以聞到，這種香是最難能可貴的。

那又是優婆塞〈夷〉中的真實珍寶，我們來學習戒法，持好這個清淨的戒，能夠自利利他，所以說他是最真實的珍寶，是佛教中的珍寶。優婆塞〈夷〉中的丈夫之人，就是現出大丈夫的相，他非常從容有威力，然後他能調伏自己的煩惱，勝過自己的煩惱，是一位大丈夫。

這個戒法有分為出家戒和在家戒。就在家居士來講，我們要學兩種戒法，一種是五戒，一種是八戒。五戒又叫做近事律儀，八戒又叫做近住律儀。為什麼五戒叫近事律儀呢？因為優婆塞叫近事男，優婆夷叫近事女。近事男，近事女就是表示發心皈依三

寶的修行人，從這時候開始來親近三寶，然後信奉三寶，是三寶中的佛化新人。因為他們的名字，他們的戒就叫近事律儀。

戒本裡說「戒是如來利生的首務，賢聖修道的要階，三機等踐，七眾通收，或越三塗而直趨天人，或超有漏而進登覺岸。五乘運載，戒為軸轄。萬善克備，戒為基本。」這都是說的戒法的重要性。

好，那我們剛剛談到五戒是近事律儀，現在我們正式來談八關齋戒。八關齋戒又叫近住律儀。

婆沙論云：「受八戒者，名曰近住，謂近阿羅漢住故；又名長養，謂長養善根，令其增多故。」

所謂近住律儀是近阿羅漢住，為什麼呢？因為我們受這個八法，就是向阿羅漢來學習，學學阿羅漢的法。像出家後，你進一步修行的話，可以證阿羅漢果。所以如果常常來學這阿羅漢法，就可以證阿羅漢果，所以我們叫近阿羅漢住。

「又名長養」，長養我們的善根。八戒又叫長養律儀，因為我們的善根很薄，我們要藉這個戒法來慢慢長養我們薄少的善根，以利有情。當我們來受持八關齋戒法，善根會一次比一次增

多，漸漸長養起來。長養什麼樣的善根呢？長養我們出家的善根。因為八關齋戒是佛陀特別為在家人制定出家的戒法，讓我們種出世解脫的因。

那我們就要說到在家跟出家有什麼不同？佛陀他這一生，先是示現在家做悉達多太子，將來會是國王。有享不盡的榮華富貴，但他還是放棄，然後，去雪山修苦行，示現出家人的相。因為三世諸佛，他們要成佛，都要經過出家這個出離的階段。正因為在家有非常多的惡因緣所纏繞，很難修行的。在大寶積經上有講「所謂家者名殺善根，」所以如果我們在家久了的話，本來有善根的，一點一點就 lost 掉了，善根漸漸被殺掉了，一點一點就長不出來了。家又叫「害助善業」，在家久了的話，會妨害幫助善業發起來，去做善業的發心會懶惰起來。什麼叫「在」呢？在家的「在」，就是「一切結使在中住故，故名為在。」也就是說一切的煩惱都在裡面住著。所以，在佛法來講，家是煩惱最主要的來源。在家多塵垢染污，出家非常妙好清淨。

在法國有一位女眾，她本身是很有名的鋼琴家，生活很優裕。有一次她到大陸去旅行，到一間廟上去，自己覺得對廟上非

常的熟悉，她就自己找到裡面去了。後來她遇到廟上的和尚，他跟她說，「妳不知道過去生，妳曾是這裡的出家人？」她就說「難怪！我為什麼來這邊感覺這麼熟悉。」老和尚就勸說，「妳趕快放下，來出家吧！」，可是她生活太優裕了，她就笑一笑，把身邊所有的錢全部供養三寶，種善根而已，她現在也沒辦法出家，因為怎麼樣？在家久了，那個善根一點一點發不起來，lost掉了。

所以我們知道，在家有無量的過患，出家有無量的功德；在家有很多的障礙，出家障礙就慢慢的減少了；在家是憂悲惱處，出家是歡樂處，因為它可以幫我們出離煩惱；在家不知足，出家就會常常知足；在家魔王愛念，在家很容易成為魔王的眷屬去，那我們出家以後，魔王就恐怖，因為我們會變成什麼？佛的眷屬。

在《華嚴經·賢首品》有談到說「家是貪愛繫縛所，欲使眾生悉免離，故示出家得解脫，於諸欲樂無所愛」。在佛經上，佛講到在家有種種煩惱，是講也講不完的。因此我們要藉這此殊勝因緣，趕緊來求受八關齋戒，八關齋戒可說是受的越多，越有利益。可是，因為我們世人，爲了要做種種家務事，要維持家庭生

活，有時候還要尋求娛樂，去散散心之類的，不能馬上放下一切，常常來受八關齋戒。所以，佛陀特別制這個一日戒法，令在家二眾受持，種出世解脫的善根。又可以藉這個因緣來暫離俗務，遠離塵囂，讓我們過一個清淨解脫的生活，能讓我們志向高尚起來。就近來講，我們可以積福修慧，遠能速得聖道。

所謂戒就是諸惡莫作，眾善奉行。就諸惡莫作來講，今天我們來學這個八事不犯，八關齋戒有八件事情我們不要去做它；眾善奉行方面，我們要來學六念法，善用其心。因為我們說要做善事，最重要關鍵點在我們的心。要怎樣來善用我們這個心呢？用這六念法來看住我們的心。念佛，念法，念僧，還有念戒，念天和念施。

現在先來看八事不犯，八關齋戒的戒相，我們有哪些戒相？大家來受八關齋戒的時候，法師會問大家說，第一條，如諸佛盡形壽不殺生，汝等一日一夜不殺生，能持否？所以第一條戒相就是不殺生戒。第二就是不偷盜；第三不淫；第四不妄語；第五不飲酒；第六要離花香璎珞，香油塗身；第七，一日一夜要離高勝床上坐及作伎樂，不故往觀聽；第八，一日一夜要離非時食。

前面這五條戒相來講，殺、盜、淫、妄、酒，這是屬於五戒，對這戒相有沒有問題？在你們生活中受五戒以後，如何受持這五條戒有沒有問題？

好，先回答你第一個問題，「一個已受三皈依的人，但他沒有受五戒，他可以來受八關齋戒嗎？」可以的。在《出家功德經》裡面有提到鞞羅羨那王子，因為王子的生活是很優渥的，他很喜歡喝酒，很喜歡跟女人在一起。佛陀知道他那樣享受生活的話，再過七天就要死了，死了將到三惡道受無量無邊的苦。佛陀看到王子跟阿難尊者有緣，所以要阿難尊者去度化他。王子說，「既然我壽命只有七天，那這樣好了，我第七天才來受八關齋戒，再出家，因為我還可以有六天，可以好好享受。」因為眾生的根性就是這樣子，果然在第七天，王子來出家，受八關齋戒，然後非常勇猛精進修行，一天一夜，他不犯這八事。命終以後，他就直接升天了，果報非常大，可以六次往返欲界天，而一次比一次壽命更長，命更好。最後生人中，還生在福樂的家庭，是富貴長子。等到福報享受完了，他覺得「生老病死實在太痛苦了，我再也不要來了」，所以他就發心出家持戒，

以後就證得二果，成辟支佛。所以只是一天一夜出家，持八關齋戒果報是那麼樣的殊勝。

我們來看看八關齋戒它的功益引證。在這白板上所列的12條，佛經上都可以找到出處的。受持齋戒的功益，非佛智莫能知，非佛言莫能信。

#### 一、可以讓我們脫離痛苦。

《藥師經》：「若有病人，欲脫病苦者，當為其人，七日七夜，受持八分齋戒。」所以，受持八關齋戒功德，可以讓我們脫離痛苦，如果覺得自己身體很不好，趕快來受八關齋戒，受的越久，身體越健康。

二、可以消滅我們的罪障。《優婆塞戒經》：「受持八戒，除五逆罪，餘一切罪，皆悉消滅。」凡欲懺悔罪障者，不可不持。

#### 三、免除橫禍。

四、遠離惡趣，就不再墮落三惡道了。

#### 五、福報優厚。

#### 六、成就迅速。

#### 七、來世尊貴。

八、得生天上，就像剛剛那位王子，本來應該墮三惡道的，現在可以生到天上，來世還尊貴。

九、戒福助往生，這個很重要，很多人說，這一生修行，修行最好的方法就是念佛往生極樂世界，那是最捷徑。可是我們要念

佛往生極樂世界，一定要修這個戒，你沒有戒福助緣，要去極樂世界還真是有障礙哦！

十、臨終歡樂。受八關齋戒讓你臨終非常的peaceful。

十一、得相好身，佛陀的三十二相都是來自持戒嚴謹，所以他非常的相好莊嚴。

十二、成佛道緣。一切諸佛要成佛，都是要先過出家的生活，示現出家的相。

剛才第九條說戒福可以助往生，為什麼要將持八關齋戒的功德，回向極樂世界去？

《觀無量壽經》說「若有眾生，若一日一夜持八戒齋，以此功德，回向願求生極樂國，戒香薰修」，像經文所說的，他要去極樂世界，至少要怎樣？一天一夜來持八關齋戒，或者出家以後持沙彌戒，或者持具足戒，比丘兩百五十條戒，比丘尼三百四十八條戒，持的非常嚴謹不犯，精進修道。用這持戒的功德，我們剛剛講這些果報，或到天上去享福，或者來世尊貴，我們不求那些，我們要求什麼呢？我們要把這功德回向去極樂世界。

像這樣的行者有戒香來薰修，所以他臨命終的時候非常的peaceful，很歡喜，很安祥的。他會見到阿彌陀佛，還有他的眷屬，極樂世界的這些菩薩會來，

放金色光，持著七寶蓮花來到這行者前。然後這位行者，就是臨命終這位亡者，他會聽到空中講話，稱讚說「善男子，如汝善人，隨順三世諸佛教故，我來迎汝」你這一生，能夠隨順三世諸佛教故，依法來修行，今天我特來迎接你，帶你去極樂世界。他聽到讚歎他的話以後，他就看到自己坐在蓮花上，蓮花馬上合起來，蓮花一合，他即刻就生到極樂世界了。在極樂世界七寶蓮池裡面，經過七天，蓮花就開了。蓮花開了以後，眼睛就張開，合掌讚歎佛，聽阿彌陀佛跟他說法，聞法歡喜，馬上證果了。在我們這裏要證果很難的，可是生到那裏去，假如你在因地裏，娑婆世界有持一日一夜八關齋戒，持得非常清淨嚴謹，一生到極樂世界很快就可以證果。而且經過半劫以後，就可以成阿羅漢，這叫中品中生。

今天因為時間的關係，以後有因緣再詳細講八關齋戒及六念法。「孔雀雖有色嚴身，不如鴻鶴能遠飛；白衣雖有富貴力，不如出家功德深。」最後願以此受戒、學戒、持戒的殊勝善根功德，迴向我及眾生皆能厚植佛因、解脫煩惱、報答四眾恩。



## I am very happy today to study the Eightfold Precepts together with all of you.

First, let us talk about the importance of the precepts. Before the Buddha entered into Nirvana, the Venerable Ananda asked the Buddha four questions. One of the questions was that, "When the Buddha is in the world, the Buddha is our teacher. Who should be our teacher after the Buddha enters into Nirvana?" The Buddha answered: "You should take the precepts as your teacher." So when the Venerable Master Hua transmitted the three refuges, he instructed us to also take refuge with the precepts. The precepts are our teacher; in other words, it means that we should take the precepts as the guidelines for our every conduct. We should only do things that comply with the precepts, or else, we shouldn't do it.

In addition, after the Buddha became enlightened under the Bodhi tree, he exclaimed: "Strange indeed, strange indeed. Every living being has the Buddha nature, which cannot be realized only because of idle thinking and attachments." It is because that we all have the Buddha nature that everyone of us is able to become a Buddha. The reason we haven't seen our Buddha nature yet is because our Buddha nature has been clouded over by our greed, anger, delusion, ignorance, jealousy and other obstacles. Then how can we really see this Buddha nature? By upholding the precepts. The Buddha nature will come out bit by bit after we study and uphold the precepts.

The Buddha spoke the Dharma for over three hundred times in 49 years. His teachings are contained in the Tripitaka, which is divided into the sutras, the sastras and the vinaya. Of the three treasures, which one should we study? If you don't have enough time to cultivate, you don't need to study the sutras and the sastras, but

you have to learn the vinaya (i.e. the precepts.) Otherwise, you can't tell what you do in your daily life is right or wrong. In case you did something wrong and you've already received the transmission of the Five Precepts, but you argued: "I didn't know what I did was wrong." Ok, in this case, you would have committed two offenses: one is the original offense due to breaking a specific precept by your wrongful conduct, the other one is the offense of ignorance due to lack of study. So we should start learning the precepts little by little as soon as possible. It is a happy and praise-worthy occasion that everyone is enjoying the study of the precepts today.

The Avatamsaka Sutra says, "If one constantly has deep faith in and reveres all Buddhas, one is able to uphold the precepts and cultivate." This passage tells us the key points of study and cultivation. When we start to learn the Buddhadharmas, firstly, we should take refuge with the Triple Jewel: believe in the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, believe in the Dharma and believe in the Sangha. Then the next step is to learn and uphold the precepts. "If one constantly upholds the precepts and cultivates, one is able to realize myriad of merit and virtue." If we can study the precepts, and always examine our mind, speech and conduct, we can purify the karma of our body, speech and mind. Then our proper Samadhi and wisdom will flourish, and all the wholesome merit and virtue will grow from this place.

In addition, it says in the Sutra of Upasaka Precepts, "Good man, if an upasaka or an upasika can sincerely uphold these precepts, this person is called the Pundarika among the upasakas (upasikas), the wonderful and supreme incense among the upasakas (upasikas), the genuine treasure among the upasakas (upasikas), and the great hero among the upasakas (upasikas)." Upasaka and upasika are

what we call the lay man and lay woman, respectively, who took refuge with the Triple Jewel and received the transmission of the Five Precepts. The meaning of this passage is that if any upasaka or upasika can bring forth the resolve to learn and uphold the precepts, this person is the Pundarika among the upasakas or upasikas. He or she is as adorned as the Pundarika. Then, he (she) is the wonderful and superb incense, for this person embodies the fragrance of the precepts, and this fragrance can be smelled in any place. This kind of fragrance is very rare and precious. What is more, he (she) is the real treasure among the upasakas or upasikas. This is because after we study the precepts and uphold them purely, we can benefit ourselves and others. This is the genuine treasure in Buddhism. He (she) is the hero among the upasakas and upasikas. That is to say, he (she) has the appearance of a great hero, very calm and powerful, being able to tame and even transcend his own afflictions. He (she) is indeed a great hero.

The precepts are divided into precepts for monastic and precepts for lay people. As for lay people, you have to study two kinds of precepts, one is the Five Precepts and the other is the Eightfold Precepts. The Five Precepts are also called precepts for Drawing Near the Triple Jewel (i.e., the Dharma Protectors), and the Eightfold Precepts are called precepts for Near-dwelling. Why are the Five Precepts called the precepts for Drawing Near the Triple Jewel? Because upasaka is called a man who is drawing near to the Triple Jewel and upasika is called a woman who is drawing near to the Triple Jewel. They refer to the cultivators who bring forth the resolve to take refuge with the Triple Jewel. From now on, they begin to draw near, believe in and honor the Triple Jewel, and they are the neophytes in Triple Jewel and Buddhism. According to their names, their precepts are called the precepts for Drawing Near the Triple

Jewel.

Do you have the precepts handbook with you? If you have the handbook with you, please turn to page 3. It says: "As for the precepts, this is the first duty of the Thus Come One that he undertook in benefiting living beings. This is an essential step for Worthies and Sages in their cultivation of the Way. All of the three potentials equally walk this path, and it gathers in and connects all of the seven different assemblies. This is the straight road that leaps over the three destinies and arrives at the realms of humans and devas. This is the way to transcend all outflows, and ultimately ascend the shore of awakening and enlightenment. Of the Five Vehicles which carry and transport, precepts are their axle hub and linchpin. Precepts are the basis and foundation for being replete with the myriad kinds of goodness." This passage is talking about the importance of the precepts.

OK, we just talked about that the Five Precepts are the precepts for Drawing Near the Triple Jewel, now we are going to address the Eightfold Precepts, which is also called the precepts for Near-dwelling. It is also mentioned in page 15. What is it talking about? The Vibhāsa Śāstra says: "One who receives the Eight Precepts is called "Near-dwelling," which means one is near to the dwelling of Arhats. It is also called "Constantly Nourishing", which means one constantly nourishes one's good roots, causing them to grow and increase." The precepts for Near-dwelling means near to the dwelling of Arhats. Why? Because by receiving the Eightfold Precepts, we are learning from the Arhats and studying the Dharma of the Arhats. For example, if you cultivate further after leaving the home-life, you can certify to the various stages of Arhats. If we constantly study this Dharma of the Arhats, we can certify to the various stages of the Arhats, that is why we are called "near the dwelling of

Arhats." We are also called "Constantly Nourishing", for we are constantly nourishing our good roots. The Eightfold Precepts are also called the precepts "Constantly Nourishing", because our good roots are very shallow. In order to benefit all sentient beings, we have to constantly nourish our shallow and small good roots bit by bit by using these precepts. Our good roots will increase and grow slowly every time we receive and uphold the Eightfold Precepts. What kind of good roots are we constantly nourishing? We are constantly nourishing the good roots for leaving the home-life. This is because the Eightfold Precepts are monastic precepts proclaimed by the Buddha specifically for lay people, in order to let them plant the cause for transcending the world and attaining liberation.

Let's talk about the difference between leaving the home-life and being at home. In the Buddha's life, he first manifested as Prince Siddhātha, who would be a king and enjoy endless riches and honors, but he still gave all of these up. Afterwards, he practiced extreme asceticism in snowy mountains and manifested as a monastic, because all the Buddhas in three periods of time have to go through the leaving home-life stage when they want to become a Buddha. It is very difficult to cultivate when you stay at home, because you would be entangled by lots of bad causations. It says in Mahārāṣṭra Sūtra that, "staying at home is equivalent to killing good roots", so if we stay too long at home, our original good roots would get lost and be destroyed bit by bit and couldn't grow any more. Remaining at home is also referred to as "harming the positive karma." This is because if we stay as a householder for too long, it obstructs our positive karma from flourishing and our attempts to do wholesome deeds. What does "stay" means? It means "abiding in all the entanglements and knots". In other

words, it means abiding in all afflictions. Therefore, from the perspective of Buddhādharma, home is the main source of afflictions. Leaving the home-life is very wonderful, pure and peaceful, while staying at home is polluted by worldly dusts.

There is a woman in France, who is a very famous pianist and lives a very affluent life. Once she traveled to Mainland China and visited a temple. She felt that she was very familiar with the temple, so she went inside. Later she met a monk in the temple. The monk told her, "Do you know that you were a monastic here in your last life?" She said, "No wonder I feel so familiar with this place!" The venerable monk suggested to her, "Hurry up and put down everything and become a monastic." But her life is too comfortable; she smiled and offered all the money she had with her to the Triple Jewel. By doing so, she did nothing more than planting some good roots. Now, she cannot leave the home-life, why is that? Because she stayed at home for so long that her good roots couldn't grow and got lost.

Therefore, we know that there are measureless troubles with staying at home, while there are measureless merit and virtue for leaving the home-life. There are a lot of obstacles for staying at home, while the obstacles slowly decrease after leaving the home-life. Home is a place of worries and afflictions, while the monastery is a place full of joy because being a monastic can help us transcend afflictions. We don't feel content with our lives when staying at home, but we are often content after we leave the home-life. When we stay at home, the king of demons love us and we will easily become his relatives. However, the king of demons will be scared after we become monastic, because we are the relatives of the Buddha.

According to the Worthy Leader Chapter of the Avatamsaka Sūtra, "Home is a place where one is bound by desires

and love, causing living beings to avoid departing from it. Leaving the home life allows one to be liberated and be replete with joy without any desires. The Buddha said in the Sutra that there are ineffable kinds of afflictions when one stays as a householder. So we should take advantage of this rare and wonderful opportunity to request the transmission of the Eightfold Precepts. The more times we receive these precepts, the more benefits we have. However, for us common people, we have to do various kinds of housework in order to sustain our family life. Sometimes, we also want to seek entertainments, take a walk and so on, thus we cannot put down everything immediately to receive the Eightfold Precepts frequently. So the Buddha especially proclaimed these one-day precepts in order that the lay people can receive and uphold them, and plant the good roots for transcending and being liberated from the world. In addition, by taking advantage of this opportunity, we can temporarily leave the worldly affairs and earthly hubbub, live a pure and liberated life and aim for loftier goals. In the short-run, we can accumulate blessings and cultivate wisdom, and in the long-run, we can quickly certify to the Sagely Path.

The meaning of precepts is do no evils and do all good deeds. From the standpoint of do no evil, we are learning how not to violate the eight rules. From the standpoint of do all good deeds, let's learn the Six Mindfulness and use our minds wholesomely. Because when we want to do good deeds, the most important point is our mind. How do we put our mind to good use? We can use the Six Mindfulness to watch over our mind. The Six Mindfulness are: be mindful of the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, the precepts, the heavens and giving.

Now let's start by looking at the eight rules that we should not violate, according to the Eightfold Precepts. When you come to receive the Eightfold Precepts, the precept

transmitter will ask you the following questions: First, as all Buddhas refrain from killing to the end of their lives, can all of you hold this precept and refrain from killing for one day and one night? Can you uphold this precept? Thus, ***the first precept form is no killing. The second, no stealing; the third, no sexual activity; the fourth, no lying; the fifth, no intoxicants; the sixth, refrain from wearing fragrant flower, decorative beads, or rubbing bodies with fragrant oil; the seventh, refrain from sitting on high, luxurious beds or participating in singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, or purposely watching, and listening to entertaining pursuits for one day and one night; the eighth, refrain from eating at improper time for one day and one night.***

The first five precepts of the Eightfold Precepts, (i.e., from no killing to no intoxicants) are the same as the Five Precepts. Any questions? After you received the transmissions of the five precepts, do you have any difficulties in upholding these precepts in your daily life? Question: If one has taken refuge with the Triple Jewel, but has not received the five precepts, can one come to receive the Eightfold Precepts? Answer: Yes. In the Sutra of Merits of Becoming a Monastic, it mentions prince Luoxianna. Because the life of a prince is full of luxuries, he enjoys drinking and the company of women. The Buddha knows that if the prince continues the luxurious lifestyle, he will die in seven days and fall into the Three Evil Paths and undergo tremendous sufferings. The Buddha knows that the prince has affinity with the Venerable Ananda, so he instructed Ananda to teach and transform the prince. The prince said, "If my life has only seven days left, I will wait until the seventh day to receive the Eightfold Precepts and then become a monastic, because I want to continue enjoying the luxurious life for another six days." His response reflects the defiled nature of living beings. As promised, on the seventh day, the

prince left the home-life and received the Eightfold Precepts, and then he cultivated vigorously for one day and one night and upheld all eight precepts completely without lapse. After he passed away, he ascended directly to the heavens. His reward was so great that he was able to be reborn in the desire heaven for six times. After each rebirth, his lifespan and blessings increased. For his last rebirth, he was reborn as a human in a family with many blessings, and he became a well-respected elder. When he exhausted his blessings, he realized that birth, old age, sickness and death are very painful to endure, so he resolved to leave the home-life and uphold the precepts in order to end birth and death. As a result of his cultivation, he certified to a second stage of Arhat and later on became a Pratyekabuddha. So even though he left the home-life and upheld the Eightfold Precepts for only one day and one night, his reward was inconceivable.

Let's take a look at the benefits of upholding the Eightfold Precepts. The twelve benefits that are listed on this white board can be found in the Sutras. The benefits of upholding the Eightfold Precepts can only be understood by the Buddha's wisdom, and can only be believed by the words spoken by the Buddha.

***First, upholding the precepts let us leave the sufferings of sickness.*** The Sutra of Medicine Master says: "If a sick person would like to leave the sufferings of sickness, he/she should receive and uphold the Eightfold Precepts for seven days and seven nights." So the merit and virtue of receiving and upholding the Eightfold Precepts can let us leave the sufferings of sickness. If you feel that you are not in good health, come and receive the Eightfold Precepts quickly, the longer you uphold the precepts, the better your health.

***Second, they can eradicate our karma and obstacles.*** The Sutra of Upasaka

Precepts says: "By receiving and upholding the Eightfold Precepts, all the offenses except for the five heavy offenses can be eradicated." Those who want to repent and reform karmic obstacles must uphold the Eightfold Precepts.

**Third, avoid the unexpected adversity. Fourth, leave the evil paths far behind and never fall into the three evil paths again.**

**Fifth, abundant blessings.**

**Sixth, quick to realize achievements.**

**Seventh, be noble and honorable in the next life.**

**Eighth, ascend to the heavens.** Just like the prince we talked about a few minutes ago, who should have fallen into the three evil paths, but later he was able to ascend to the heavens and still be noble and honorable in his subsequent life.

**Ninth, the blessings of precepts are helpful for rebirth,** and this is very important. Many people said that the best method of cultivation in this life is reciting the Buddha's name and being reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, for it is a shortcut. However, we must uphold these precepts if we want to recite the Buddha's name to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss. If you are not assisted by the blessings of the precepts, there still would be obstacles in your way to the Land of Ultimate Bliss.

**Tenth, delight on the verge of passing away.** Upholding the Eightfold Precepts makes you feel very peaceful when you are passing away.

**Eleventh, obtain a very good looking appearance and body.** The thirty-two hallmarks of the Buddha all come from upholding the precepts strictly, so he has a very adorned appearance.

**Twelfth, the conditions for becoming a Buddha and obtaining the Way.** Every Buddha has to live a monastic life and manifest as a monastic if he wants

to become a Buddha.

The ninth item we just mentioned is about how the blessings of precepts are helpful for our rebirth. Why should we transfer the merit and virtue of upholding the Eightfold Precepts to the Land of Ultimate Bliss?

According to the Sutra of the Buddha of Limitless Life, "If living beings uphold the Eightfold Precepts for one day and one night and transfer the resulting merit and virtue towards their vow to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, they will be perfumed by the fragrance of the precepts." Just like what the Sutra says, if one wants to go to the Land of Ultimate Bliss what is the least he should do? He should uphold the Eightfold Precepts for one day and one night, or uphold the precepts for sramana after becoming a monastic, or uphold the precepts for fully-ordained monastic: the two hundred and fifty precepts for Bhikshu and the three hundred and forty-eight precepts for Bhikshuni. One should uphold these precepts very strictly without any lapse and violation, and cultivate very vigorously. With the merit and virtue of upholding the precepts, one has the rewards we just talked about: ascending to the heavens to enjoy blessings, or being noble and honorable in the next life. However, we won't aim for those rewards. What rewards do we aim for? We should transfer these merit and virtue to the Land of Ultimate Bliss.

When a cultivator has been perfumed by the fragrance of the precepts (i.e., pervasively influenced by the precepts), he will be very peaceful, happy and serene when he is on the verge of passing away. He will see the Amitaba Buddha and the Buddha's relatives and associates. The Bodhisattvas from the Land of Ultimate Bliss will come before him, emitting golden light and holding a lotus flower adorned with seven jewels. Then the cultivator, the one who is passing away, will hear

the voice in the air praising him: "Good man, I come to welcome a wholesome person such as you. Because you have complied with the teachings of the Buddhas from three periods of time and cultivated according to the Dharma, I specifically come to welcome you today and bring you to the Land of Ultimate Bliss." After he hears the praise for him, he can see himself sitting on the lotus flower, which closes immediately. After the lotus flower closes, he will be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss immediately. The lotus flower will open after seven days in the seven jewels lotus pool. After that, he will open his eyes, put his palm together and praise the Buddha. He listens to the Amitaba Buddha speaking Dharma for him, he is very blissful and certifies to fruition immediately. It is very difficult to certify to fruition here in this world. But you would soon certify to fruition once you are reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss if you upheld the Eightfold Precepts very purely and strictly for one day and one night in the Saha world. In addition, you will become an Arhat after half a Kalpa. This is called intermediate rebirth in the intermediate level.

Because of the time limit today, we will talk more in detail about the Eightfold Precepts and the Six Mindfulness should the opportunity arise later. "Although a peacock has colorful features to adorn its body, it is not as good as a crane which has the ability to fly far; although a lay person has the power of riches and honor, his merit and virtue is not as deep as that of a monastic." Finally, I would like to transfer these rare and inconceivable good roots and merit and virtue to all living beings and myself, wishing that all of us can deeply plant the cause of Buddhahood, transcend afflictions and repay the kindness of the fourfold assembly.





# 金聖寺 法會通告

## GOLD SAGE MONASTERY ANNOUNCEMENT OF DHARMA ASSEMBLIES

|              |   |   |
|--------------|---|---|
| 週日<br>Sunday | 11 / 12   | 楞嚴法門 (8:00AM~3:00 PM)<br>The Shurangama Dharma Door<br>早上：誦楞嚴咒 楞嚴大剛開示 下午：誦楞嚴經 打坐<br>Morning: Recite The Shurangama Mantra Introduction to the Shurangama sutra<br>Afternoon: Recite The Shurangama sutra Meditation |
|              | 11 / 19~26  | 梁皇寶懺法會 (8:15AM~5:00 PM)<br>The Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Liang  |
|              | 11 / 19   | 傳授八關齋戒 (7:10 AM)<br>Transmission Refuge with the Eight-fold Precepts  |
|              |   | 傳授幽冥戒 (4:00 PM)<br>Transmission of Precepts for the Deceased  |
| 11 / 26      | 金光明經講座 (9:00 AM~11:00 AM)<br>Lecture on The Sutra of Golden Light |   |

| 十一月份活動 Buddhist Events in Nov. 2006   | 日期 Date                      | 地點 Place                   |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 慶祝觀音菩薩出家法會<br>Celebration of Gwan Yin Bodhisattva's Leaving Home  | 11 / 5 週日                    | 萬佛聖城<br>(CTTB)             |
| <b>金聖寺將安排巴士前往聖城參加法會，請於即日起至11月2日以前報名。</b><br>Gold Sage Monastery will arrange bus tour for same-day travel. Please sign up before Nov. 2 |                              |                            |
| 慶祝觀音菩薩出家法會<br>Celebration of Gwan Yin Bodhisattva's Leaving Home  | 11 / 9 週四 8:30 AM ~ 10:30 AM | 金聖寺<br>Gold Sage Monastery |
| 大悲懺法會 Great Compassion Repentance   | 每日 1:00 PM ~ 2:30 PM         |                            |

| 十二月份活動 Buddhist Events in Dec. 2006  | 日期 Date                      | 地點 Place                   |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 阿彌陀佛聖誕法會 Celebration of Amitabha buddha's Birthday   | 12/17                        | 萬佛聖城<br>(CTTB)             |
| <b>金聖寺將安排巴士前往聖城參加法會，請於12月14日以前報名。</b><br>Gold Sage Monastery will arrange bus tour for same-day travel. Please sign up before December 14. |                              |                            |
| 長青學佛班 Elders' Dharma Study Group   | 12 / 2 週六 2:00 PM ~ 4:30 PM  | 金聖寺<br>Gold Sage Monastery |
| 金光明經講座 Lecture on The Sutra of Golden Light  | 12 / 3,24 週日 9:00 AM ~ 11 AM |                            |
| 念佛共修法會 Dharma Assembly of Buddha Recitation  | 12 / 10 週日 8:15 AM ~ 4 PM    |                            |
| 大悲懺法會 Great Compassion Repentance  | 每日 1:00 PM ~ 2:30 PM         |                            |