



harma Flower Sutra

*with commentary of Tripitaka Master Hua
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Dhyana is a Sanskrit word which means "stilling thought." It also means, "cultivation of thought." Dhyana samadhi is the attainment of the advantages of "stilling thought." To gain skill in it you must actually practice it.

Attaining the profound and subtle Dhyana concentration, they perfected the three clarities, the clarity of the Heavenly Eye, the clarity of past lives, and the clarity of the extinction of outflows.

The Heavenly Eye is also called a "clarity" because with it one can see all marks. The clarity of past lives refers to knowing what went on in the past, not only in one lifetime, but through many lives into the past. It means knowing in which life you were a Bodhisattva. "Ah! I have practiced the Bodhisattva Way in the past. In such and such a place, I taught and transformed living beings. I did this in the past; I should continue to do so now." In the past, you made a vow to teach living beings, and so now, in the present, you make that vow again. You sit there and see, "Oh, I left home during the time of Shakyamuni Buddha. Shariputra and I were brothers! My older brother leaves home in every life to be a Bhikshu, and I should do the same. If he goes on ahead, I shouldn't fall behind." With the clarity of past lives you see, "In the past, during the time of Shakyamuni Buddha, I went and bowed to him. At that time I heard him speak the Sutras, and so now I am very intelligent and can understand all the Sutras as soon as I read them. In fact, if I don't understand something, I often have a dream and understand it through the dream. I dream,

The phoenix hasn't come,
And the river sends no map.
I am finished.

That's something I said myself in the past!! Gee! I said those words in the past, and so, hearing them now, I am deeply impressed."

"The phoenix hasn't come, and the river sends no map. I am finished." Those lines were spoken by Confucius in *THE ANALECTS*. The phoenix appears when a wise man rules, as during the time of Emperor Shun when these birds were often seen. During the time of Fu-hsi, a turtle rose out of the river with a chart on its back, giving him the idea of the eight trigrams of the *I CHING*. "But now," said Confucius, "We no longer see such animals. Thus, I know it's all over. I'm not going to work anymore. I'm going to retire."

Or, they say, "In the past, I was a thief. Now I am going to change and be good." Such are the benefits gained from knowing past lives. Others say, "Oh, how strange! In the past, I have been a pig, a cat--- everything! When I was a cat, I could climb trees. When I was a dog, I guarded the door. When I was a pig, I just loved to eat. Gosh! That's really weird. Like Chih-kung, said, 'Ancient, ancient, strange, strange...'"

The clarity of extinction of outflows means that all faults and habits are gone, outflows are ended. The most important thing is to have samadhi. With samadhi, you can arrive at the stage of no-outflows. As long as you have outflows, the cause of the hells remains, as well as the cause of the hungry ghosts, and the cause of the animals. If you have extinguished outflows, then you have closed the doors to the hells, to the animal realm, and to the realm of the hungry ghosts. If you get rid of outflows, you're safe. If you have any outflows at all, then they will always be cropping up all over the place. The three evil paths will be waiting for you. The ghosts will be calling for you to come to them, and the animals will be waving frantically at you, saying, "Hey!! Come on over here!"

The Six Penetrations, Six Spiritual Penetrations: the Penetration of the Heavenly Eye, the Penetration of the Heavenly Ear, the Penetration of Past Lives, the Penetration of Others' Thought, the Penetration of the Extinction of Outflows, the Penetration of the Complete Spirit. If you attain these six penetrations, you can make infinite transformations as you will.

The Heavenly Eye is difficult to obtain. Most people would have to cultivate for five hundred great aeons in order to attain the Six Penetrations. If you have planted many good roots in former lives, you may meet a Good Knowing Advisor who will teach you a special Dharma-door. Then you won't have to pass through five hundred great aeons to attain the Penetrations. Of all the people who cultivate the Way, why do so few obtain spiritual powers? It's because the merit and virtue they have accumulated through cultivation, does not exceed the amount of offense karma they have created. So, not only do people not attain the Six Spiritual penetrations, but, even if they do obtain them, they will lose them again. Everyone can count up their daily score. During any given day, do you give rise to more proper thoughts, or to more deviant thoughts? Do you have more false thinking, or more thoughts of cultivation? You should be able to figure it out for yourself. If you have more false thinking than thoughts of proper cultivation, then you have created more offense karma than merit and virtue. If all day long you don't have any false thinking, but just singlemindedly cultivate the Way, then you create more merit and virtue than offense karma. It's a very important point. Some people cultivate and attain the Five Eyes and Six penetrations, because they have little false thinking, and their thoughts of cultivation are firm and singleminded. In the Buddhist Lecture Hall, now, there are many people who are just about to attain the Five Eyes. Why? Because they cultivate the Thousand-Hands, Thousand Eyes Dharma of the Forty-two Hands. This Dharma will cause you to increase your eyes and hands. If you feel that your two eyes are not enough, you can grow some more. I'm not joking! You can be meditating in one place, but you'll know what's going on all around you outside.

"Isn't that just false thinking?" you say.

From the point of view of a Bodhisattva, yes, it's still just false thinking. It depends on where you're at. What for common people is false thinking, for ghosts is not. Ghosts don't have "false" thinking, they have "rotten thinking." They just think about rotten things. When ordinary people meditate and are able to go outside, that's not considered false thinking. But, for Arhats, it's false thinking, because, Arhats, should always be in samadhi. When you are in samadhi, you shouldn't be running outside to mind other people's business. Arhats have some leftover habits, habits going back many lifetimes and many aeons, which they have not cut off. So, what for common people is false thinking, for Arhats is not. What, for Arhats is not false thinking, for Bodhisattvas, is false thinking. You should not just think that false thinking is false thinking, and that's it. There are many different varieties of false thinking. What for Bodhisattvas would not be considered false thinking, would be considered false thinking for a Buddha. For example, I am teaching you to study the Buddhadharma, and you, for your part, do not consider this false thinking. But, from my point of

view, it is false thinking. You guys think, "Oh, probably I've got samadhi!" when in reality, it is just still false thinking. It's very difficult to pinpoint these things exactly, unless you really understand what's going on.

With the Penetration of the Heavenly Eye, you can see all the activities of the gods; you can also see what's going on among people. With the Heavenly Eye, however, you can only SEE the gods moving around and stuff. You can't hear what they are saying. If you have the Heavenly Ear, you can hear them talking. They might be saying, "Hey, what a good kid, cultivating the Way. He can come up here to heaven with us pretty soon." You can hear them praising you, "Oh, what a good boy. He has taken refuge with the Triple Jewel. He practices Dhyana meditation and is fairly sincere. He's so-and-so's disciple."

The Penetration of Past Lives means that you can know what people did in their former lives, what their former names were, and what they did. You might realize, "Oh, I met this person five hundred great aeons ago. Hmm...I think he was my father then. And that person over there, was my mother five hundred great aeons ago. That one was my brother. That one was my sister." You'll know all those kinds of things. How far you can see into the past--five hundred years, five hundred centuries, five hundred aeons--depends upon how much skill you have. "They were my family and friends before, and so, no matter what, I am going to think of a way to save them in this life, to get them enlightened."

The Penetration of Others' Thoughts, is very strange. Before someone says something, you know what they are thinking. "Ah, that one is having such-and-such a false thought. That one is thinking about her child, she really can't put him down. That one is thinking about her mother who is sick. She is very worried about her. That one is thinking about her younger sister, "I really want to cross her over. Will she ever believe in the Buddha?" That one wants to save her mother. That one wants to save his father. See? Every living being has his own brand of false thinking. If you have this penetration, you can know what each one of them is thinking. But, you'd better be darn careful not to tell them that you know what they are thinking. If you do that, they won't be able to face you again. Why? Because you know their secrets. They will be afraid that you know all about them. Don't blurt out, "Hey, I know just what you're false thinking about. You're false thinking about New York." Don't tell them these wonderful things. You may know it, but just act like you don't know it. Pretend it isn't even happening. Then you can know their false thoughts from then on. Don't think that you can go telling people that you know what they are thinking.

The Penetration of the Extinction of Outflows means that you have gotten rid of all your faults and bad habits.

The Penetration of the Complete Spirit refers to having all kinds of power of magical transformation. You can be sitting in one place, and at the same time go off to New York to play. You can go take a look at things in L.A. It won't even take you one second to make your return trip either. You can make a round trip faster than a rocket. But you have to gain this penetration first; if you don't have it, forget it.

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