



# 念佛法門解答

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON RECITATION OF THE BUDDHA'S NAME

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多說一句話，就少念一聲佛，這是對的；少說一句話，多念一聲佛，這也是對的。要是能把這個理論會通了，「行也彌陀，坐也彌陀」，行路也是彌陀，坐著也是彌陀，站著也是彌陀，臥著也是彌陀。你念茲在茲，念得念而無念，無念而念，念得風也吹不透了，雨也打不漏了，只有念佛這一念，旁的什麼都忘了。所以說「念佛能念無間斷」：你念佛念得沒有間斷了；「口念彌陀打成片」：一片的意思就是接念連連不斷了，沒有停止的時候，沒有間斷的時候；「雜念不生得三昧」：你雜念不生就是正念，就是正受，那就是三昧了；「往生淨土定有盼」：你決定往生。你只要能念得這個樣子，念而無念，不念而念，你颶風也是阿彌陀佛，下雨也是阿彌陀佛，那個鐘響的聲音，也聽它在那兒「阿彌陀佛！」，在那兒念佛！無論什麼水流風動都是衍摩訶，都是念南無阿彌陀佛。

Speak one sentence more, recite the Buddha's name one time less. This is correct. Speak one sentence less; recite the Buddha's name one time more. This is also correct. If we understand this theory, then "when walking we recite Amitabha and when sitting we recite Amitabha." That is, when we're walking, we recite Amitabha; when we're sitting down we also recite Amitabha; when we're standing we recite Amitabha, and even when we're lying down, we recite Amitabha. We recite constantly without the thought of reciting, and without the thought of reciting and yet reciting to the point that the wind cannot blow through and the rain cannot leak through; rather there is only the thought of reciting the Buddha's name and nothing else. Therefore it is said, *Recite the Buddha's name continuously, reciting without a break. The mouth recites Amitabha and makes things of a piece.* This happens when one's recitations continue one after another, without stopping. *When extraneous thoughts do not arise, one attains samadhi.* If you don't give rise to false thoughts, there is mindfulness, or proper perception. That is *samadhi*. *For rebirth in the Pure Land, your hope is not in vain.* You will definitely be reborn there. All you have to do is recite without the thought of reciting, not reciting yet reciting, reciting Amitabha's name through the storms until even the sound of the bell is reciting, "Amitabha Buddha!" When the waters flow and the wind blows, they proclaim the Mahayana. They are reciting "Homage to Amitabha Buddha."

If you can recite like this, I guarantee that you will be reborn in the Pure Land as if not being reborn, not being reborn and yet being





你能這個樣子，我保證不生而生，生而無生。上品上生也忘了，下品下生也不記得了，因為你不記得，你應該得到的，你一定得到；你不應該得到的，你想得到也得不到。所以一切唯心造，不是說我想什麼就是什麼，要功夫到了；功夫到，你念佛把一切一切的都放下了。「終日厭煩娑婆苦」：我們每天覺得五濁惡世一劫濁、見濁、煩惱濁、眾生濁、命濁，這麼多東西都是濁惡的，我們厭煩娑婆這個濁惡的苦；「纔將紅塵心念斷」：所謂紅塵是什麼呢？就是男女的淫欲，把淫欲先要斷了，這可以說是看破紅塵了；「求生極樂意念重」：你求生極樂世界這個意念把它看重了，注重它；「放下染念歸淨念」：你染污的念沒有了，就是淨念，就是淨土法門。各位有什麼問題，可以提出來問。

**問：既然淨土是一乘佛，萬修萬人去，為什麼還有三輩九品？**

答：雖然說是淨土法門，萬修萬人去，去的人也是早就修過的，他修道成熟了，他就去了，不是這一生一世的事情。你就遇到《阿彌陀經》，念阿彌陀佛，經上不是說「不以一佛二佛三四五佛而種善根」的，才能遇著這個法門；已經於無量百千萬億佛所種諸善根，你才能遇到這樣殊勝的佛法。至於怎麼還分九品？人的根性都不是一樣的，有的人勇猛精進，一點懷疑心也沒有，對淨土法門至誠懇切地那麼念佛，所以他上品上生。念佛念得多了，他也修的時間多了；你剛剛修行，念佛沒念那麼多，願意往生就下品下生了。你到那個地方再念，念佛、念法、念僧。總而言之，功不唐捐，你用一分功，就得一分的果報；你用十分功，就得十分的果報，不會不平等的，這是平等的。它因為三根普被，利鈍兼收，它要不分出這個品級來，上根和鈍根的又有什麼分別？到那兒都是一樣的？所以有的到那兒得上品，有的到那個地方得下品。不過，到那兒就不會墮落了。你無論上品上生也好，下品下生也好，生到極樂世界，那裏沒有三惡道，不會墮落。它這是很平等的，平等待遇，不是不平等

reborn there. You will even forget about what grade of lotus you will be reborn in. Since you do not remember, you certainly will attain what you deserve. What you do not deserve, you cannot attain even if you wish to. Thus, everything is made from the mind alone. However, this does not mean everything you think will come true. You must have adequate spiritual skill. If your spiritual skill is sufficient and you recite the Buddha's name, you let go of absolutely everything. *If all day you detest the sufferings of the Saha world.* Everyday we experience the "evil age of the five turbidities." That is, the *kalpa* turbidity, the view turbidity, the affliction turbidity, the living beings turbidity, and the life turbidity. These are turbid things. We are vexed by these sufferings in the Saha World. *One cuts off thoughts of mundane defilements.* Mundane defilements refer to lust between men and women. Once we cut off lust, we can say that we have given up mundane defilements. *Make rebirth in Ultimate Bliss your mind's essential aim.* You must regard the wish to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss as extremely important. *Renounce defiled thoughts and pure thoughts you will find.* The absence of defiled thoughts is pure thought. That's the Pure Land practice. You may now ask questions.

**Q: Since the Pure Land is the one Buddha-vehicle, so that when ten thousand people cultivate it, ten thousand people will be reborn there, why are there three levels and nine grades of lotuses?**

A: Although the Pure Land practice teaches that 10,000 out of 10,000 people who cultivate will be reborn there, those who get reborn have cultivated for a long time. Now their cultivation has matured, so they can go there. It's not something that is accomplished in just one lifetime. If people encounter the *Amitabha Sutra* and recite Amitabha's name, the Sutra says, "It's not just from the good roots planted with one Buddha, two Buddhas, three, four, or five Buddhas" that one is able to encounter this dharma door. You have planted good roots with limitless hundreds, thousands, ten thousands, or billions of Buddhas in the past, so you now can encounter this supreme Buddha Dharma. Why are there nine grades of lotuses? People have different faculties and natures. Some are vigorous and don't have any doubts, so when they sincerely do the Pure Land practice and recite the Buddha's name, they can be reborn in the highest grade. Such people have recited the Buddha's name and cultivated for a long time. If you are a beginner who has not recited much and you want to be reborn there, you will be reborn in a lower grade of lotus. When you get to the Pure Land, you continue to recite the name of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Your effort will definitely not be in vain. If you contribute one portion of effort, you will receive one portion of results. If you contribute ten portions of effort, you will receive ten portions of results. Everything is fair. This dharma suits all beings of different faculties, sharp or dull; it doesn't discriminate between the different





的。你功力還不夠，怎麼能夠上品上生呢？

**問：上人提到西方極樂世界就不會墮落，那是不是會有的人躲到蓮花裡就不出來了？**

答：你要能躲也不錯呀！你有機會躲一躲也好呀！

**問：西方三聖—阿彌陀佛、觀世音菩薩、大勢至菩薩。可是，為什麼我們一般不念大勢至菩薩？而且我對大勢至菩薩的事情一點都不懂；既然說西方三聖，為什麼大勢至菩薩好像跟我們沒什麼關係？**

答：這是人和大勢至菩薩的緣沒有那麼深。觀世音菩薩他是悲心大，大勢至菩薩他勢力大，他一舉手一投足，大地六遍震動，把人嚇得不敢和他接近了。娑婆世界的人怕地震，所以也怕大勢至菩薩。（眾人笑）

**問：到底是要專心專意念阿彌陀佛，還是專心專意念觀世音菩薩？還是兩個都念？**

答：你喜歡念觀音菩薩，觀音菩薩就來接引你；你喜歡念阿彌陀佛，阿彌陀佛就接引你去。不論你念哪一個，比不念都好。就怕你念念，把觀世音菩薩也忘了，阿彌陀佛也想不起來了。

**問：我們念佛用念珠，念到母珠的時候可不可以跨越？有人說不可以跨越，不過我以前聽說這是治昏沉而已。**

答：念珠者，是要你「念住」。叫你不要打妄想，這是念珠的本意。至於跳過去是不跳過去，根本微不足道的，沒意義。其實就是因為你什麼都不懂，才造成這些邪說來，也可以說是歪理。弄得人迷迷糊糊，也不知道是什麼，聽上來還很熱鬧，念佛用念珠念得會跳舞。（眾人笑）我們信佛要信真理，念珠治昏沉是對的，這也就是讓你有個數，有一個念頭在那兒。

grades. What's the difference between those who have sharp faculties and those with dull faculties? When they get there, they are all the same. Some are reborn from a higher grade and some from a lower grade. Regardless of what grade they are, they cannot fall to a lower state, since the three evil paths do not exist there. All receive equal treatment, and none are treated unfairly. However, if you don't have enough spiritual skill, how can you be reborn from the highest grade?

**Q: The Venerable Master mentioned that when people are reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, they will never fall to a lower state again. So, is it possible for someone to hide inside the lotus flower and never come out?**

A: If you can hide in there, that would not be bad! If you get a chance, you can try to hide inside there.

**Q: The Three Sages of the Western Pure Land are Amitabha Buddha, Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva, and Great Strength Bodhisattva. Why don't we normally recite the name of Great Strength Bodhisattva? Also, I don't know anything about Great Strength Bodhisattva. We call them the Three Sages of the Western Pure Land, but why does it seem like Great Strength Bodhisattva has nothing to do with us?**

A: It's because people don't have great affinities with Great Strength Bodhisattva. Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva has the heart of great compassion. Great Strength Bodhisattva has great power. Every time he moves, the ground shakes, and people get scared and do not dare to get close to him. The people in the Saha world are scared of earthquakes, so they are also scared of Great Strength Bodhisattva. [The audience laughs]

**Q: Should I focus on reciting Amitabha Buddha's name, Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's name, or both?**

A: If you like to recite Guan Yin Bodhisattva, Guan Yin Bodhisattva will come to welcome you [to the Pure Land]. If you like to recite Amitabha Buddha, Amitabha Buddha will come to welcome you. Reciting either name is better than not reciting. It is only to be feared that you forget to recite Guan Yin Bodhisattva, and also forget to recite Amitabha Buddha.

**Q: Can we skip the mother bead on the recitation beads that we commonly use during Buddha recitation? Some people say that it can be skipped. However, I heard others say that it helps us to concentrate.**

A: Recitation beads help you concentrate and get rid of your false thoughts. That's their primary purpose. Whether you skip it or not is not important. It doesn't mean anything. It's because you don't understand that you entertain such wrong ideas. This is a wrong theory that confuses people. It sounds very interesting, like recitation beads that can dance. [Audience laughs]. Buddhists need to believe in what's true. Recitation beads are used to concentrate. It's to help you count recitations and be mindful. If you truly recite the Buddha's name, you don't need anything. "If you use your true mind to recite the Buddha's name, you don't need your mouth. If you use your true





你若真念佛，什麼也都不要了，「真心念佛不用口，真心燒香不用手」。

各有各的因緣不同，每一個不一樣的。你看那個人念佛，用念珠念，往生了；另個人學那個人用念珠，他又不往生，各人有各人的因緣。說萬修萬人去，有的時候也萬修萬人不去。法無定法，人有定人。人是一定的，法無定法。你沒有定力，修什麼法也都在外邊轉；你若有定力，用什麼功都能夠一心不亂。淨土法門，就是修行人藉佛力往生淨土。雖然說藉著阿彌陀佛的願力可以往生，可是你自己要不念也沒有用，阿彌陀佛也愛莫能助。所以這還是要有自力，還是要「自己生死自己了，自己吃飯自己飽」，你若自己不念佛，阿彌陀佛也沒有辦法你，想要接你也接不去。阿彌陀佛是悲心切切，希望我們眾生都生到他那個極樂世界去——無有眾苦，但受諸樂。可是你卻要和阿彌陀佛鬥鬥氣，「我就是不要諸樂，我就願意受眾苦」，阿彌陀佛也沒有辦法你，他也只有乾著急。

**問：如果我們天天念大勢至菩薩，那是不是地震就可以沒有了呢？**

答：念大勢至菩薩，地震不震，這是人的一種妄執；並不是你念他，他就不震了，也並不是你不念他，他就震了。這地震，都是由每一個人自己造成的。這是眾生的業力，這不是大勢至菩薩的神通。大勢至菩薩一舉手一投足，大地六遍震動，對眾生是沒有害處的。它不會像我們這個業力所感，有這個唐山大地震，或者美國六十多年以前三藩市大地震，不是那個樣子；它震是震，但是沒有損傷。不過，你要知道觀音、勢至，是阿彌陀佛的兩位弟子，等阿彌陀佛退位了，觀世音菩薩繼承佛。繼承觀世音菩薩位的是誰呢？就是大勢至菩薩。大勢至菩薩大約現在還在學習怎麼做佛呢！觀音菩薩快要接彌陀佛這個位，在極樂世界做教主了。但還要很久，不是現在，不是外道所說的「彌勒菩薩現在這白陽世界掌權，怎麼樣怎麼樣...」，不是那樣子。不要聽聽牆根兒的那些董二大爺講佛法。

☞待續

mind to offer incense, you don't need your hands.”

Each has his own affinities; everyone is different. You see one person recite the Buddha's name with recitation beads and get reborn (in the Pure Land). Another person tries to use recitation beads, but isn't reborn. Each has his own causes and conditions. It was said that 10,000 out of 10,000 people who cultivate will attain rebirth. However, sometimes 10,000 out of 10,000 people cultivate and don't attain rebirth. There are no fixed dharmas, but only fixed people. People can be fixed, but not dharmas. If you cannot concentrate, then regardless of what dharma you cultivate, you will be distracted by external states. If you can concentrate, you will be single-minded and unconfused. In the Pure Land practice, one relies on the power of the Buddha to be reborn in the Pure Land. Even though we say we can be reborn through the power of Amitabha Buddha's vows, if you don't recite, it won't work. Even Amitabha Buddha cannot help you. So, you need to use your own power. You need to “end your own birth and death, just as you eat your own fill.” If you don't recite the Buddha's name, then Amitabha Buddha has no way to help you. He wants to welcome you (to the Pure Land), but you don't want to go. Amitabha Buddha is compassionate and hopes that all beings can be reborn in his Land of Ultimate Bliss and endure none of the sufferings, but enjoy every bliss. But you fight with Amitabha Buddha and say, “I don't want to enjoy every bliss; I just want to suffer.” In that case, even Amitabha Buddha cannot help you. He will only worry about you.

**Q: If we recite Great Strength Bodhisattva's name everyday, will earthquakes disappear?**

**A:** In reciting Great Strength Bodhisattva's name, whether there is or isn't an earthquake is due to people's false attachments. It's not the case that if you recite his name, he will cause the earth not to quake, nor is it the case that if you don't recite his name, he will cause the earth to quake. We are the ones creating earthquakes. They are due to the karma of living beings, not to the special spiritual powers of Great Strength Bodhisattva. Every time he moves, the ground will shake, but it doesn't harm any living being, unlike the earthquakes created by our karma, such as the great earthquake in Tangshan [near Beijing], or the great earthquake in San Francisco over sixty years ago. It is not like them. The earthquakes, but there is no damage. You need to know that Guan Yin Bodhisattva and Great Strength Bodhisattva are Amitabha Buddha's disciples. When Amitabha Buddha completes his term, Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva will be the next Buddha. Who's after Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva? Great Strength Bodhisattva. Right now he's learning how to become a Buddha! Pretty soon Guan Yin Bodhisattva will take Amitabha Buddha's position as the teaching host of the Land of Ultimate Bliss. But it's still a long way off, not now. It's not like externalists who say things like, “Maitreya





Bodhisattva has already come to the world." Don't listen to just anyone speak "Dharma".

☞ To be continued

