

# 念佛法門解答 (二)

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON RECITATION OF THE BUDDHA'S NAME (Part II)

上宣下化老和尚於1984年4月萬佛聖城開示

A TALK BY THE VENERABLE MASTER HSUAN HUA

AT THE CITY OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS IN APRIL 1984

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好像以前香港就有一個遠參，這個遠參也學過佛教，以後就別開生面，自立為祖師。他也講《彌陀經》，但是一邊講《彌陀經》就一邊謗《彌陀經》。《彌陀經》「從是西方，過十萬億佛土，有世界名曰極樂，其國眾生無有眾苦，但受諸樂。」，他說：「從是西方過十萬億佛土，哪個量地官去給量的地？哪個人寫出來這麼遠的路程，用什麼方法量地？你們大家想一想，這豈不是騙小孩子的嗎？」你聽聽他說話的這個味道！他說沒有量地官去量這個地，他不相信有十萬億佛土，他說「或者十一萬、十一萬億，或者九萬億，怎麼一定就知道它是十萬億？」你看！他就用這個邏輯學、現代的科學，來證明《彌陀經》是假的，是偽造的；他只說《法華經》是真的，其餘的經典、所有的經典都是假的。所以他就成了一個唯心佛教社，這個唯心佛教社在星馬一帶有很多的信徒，都是閉門造車，在那個地方獨霸稱王，那是很可憐的！這是老一代的，他已經死了；可是後一代又繼續的、又生出來。在這種情形之下，令很多人都失

A long time ago there was a visiting monk in Hong Kong, who also studied the Buddhadharma. Later he just proclaimed himself a patriarch. He also lectured on the *Amitabha Sutra*. However, as he lectured, he would slander the Sutra. According to the sutra, "Passing from here through hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhalands to the west, there is a world called Ultimate Bliss... All living beings of this country endure none of the sufferings, but enjoy every bliss." Instead, he argued, "Has any land surveyor actually measured the distance? Who came up with such a remote distance? What method did that person use to measure the land? Think about it, isn't it just a fairytale?" Listen to the way he spoke! He said he did not believe the distance was 100,000 million countries because no one had measured it. He said, "It could be 110,000 million, or 90,000 million. How do we know for sure the distance was 100,000 million worlds?" Look! He used logic and modern science to prove that the *Amitabha Sutra* was wrong and misleading. He believed only in the *Dharma Flower Sutra* and said that it was the only authentic sutra and the rest of sutras were apocryphal. Therefore, he formed a Mind-Only Buddhist Association, which attracted many followers in Singapore and Malaysia. They were impractical and thinking to be dominant there. It was pretty pathetic! He was of the old generation and is now gone. However, the new generation has inherited his old teaching. A lot of people were influenced by his beliefs and led astray. People who were just starting to learn the Buddhadharma wished to improve themselves, but instead they ended up following a demon. Wherever we listen to Dharma talks, we must have proper knowledge and views. After listening

去方向，很多人初發心本來是想要學好，結果就跟著魔王跑了。我們在什麼地方聽法，要有正知正見，聽了正法，應該生大歡喜；聽邪知邪見的人說的話，我們應該如萬箭穿心這麼樣的痛心，怎麼還可以人云亦云，隨聲附和，說某某人這麼樣說的，某某人這樣講的？

**問：**《阿彌陀經》裏的西方世界是這麼美好，每一個人一心想學佛、念佛，想往生極樂世界，這個難道不是逃避、或者是好逸惡勞嗎？

**答：**佛教裡八萬四千法門，淨土法門是佛不問自說的，這是一種不可思議的法門，令眾生難以相信的法門。難以相信的事情，也不證明這個事情就做不到的。

**問：**遇到問題時，別人的經驗都不一定能幫助解決自己的問題，那我們念佛，念經是為了什麼？為了何事？請上人開示。

**答：**念佛不是為了解決問題，念佛是為著修淨土法門，往生極樂世界，是預備將來的資糧，並不是預備解決任何人的問題。你誦經，也是增加自己的智慧。你自己不能解決一切的問題、現前的問題，你是智慧不夠；你要智慧夠了，一切的問題都迎刃而解，當機立斷。

**問：**念佛是不是就是要出家？

**答：**念佛怎麼要出家呢？念佛要出家，出家人念什麼？

**問：**念觀世音菩薩的聖號，與念阿彌陀佛的聖號，兩者有何區別？效果是不是相同？

**答：**你這一分別，效果根本就沒有了。

**問：**有人念佛的時候，有時會常常忘了一切，或者是忘了呼吸，請問這是不是昏沈？

**答：**死了不更好嗎？（眾人鼓掌）

**問：**上星期第一次參加打佛七，竟然哭

to the Proper Dharma, we should feel happy and pleased. Whenever listening to the “dharma” spoken by people with misguided views, we should feel as pained as if 10,000 arrows pierced our hearts. How could we accept, pass on, or follow their teachings?

**Q: The Western World as described in the Amitabha Sutra is such a wonderful place. Everyone is determined to learn Buddhism and recite the Buddha's name, and hopes to be reborn to the Land of Ultimate Bliss. Isn't this a form of escapism? Aren't they trying to enjoy the benefits without putting in the work?**

**A:** There are 84,000 methods of practice in Buddhism. Shakyamuni Buddha taught the Pure Land dharma of his own initiative, without being requested. This is an unimaginable dharma. It is difficult for living beings to believe in such a dharma. It's difficult to believe but that does not mean that it is unachievable.

**Q: Whenever we encounter problems, others' experiences do not necessarily help us solve our own problems. Why should we recite the Buddha's name and recite sutras? Could Venerable Master explain?**

**A:** We are not reciting the Buddha's name to solve problems. Rather, we do it as part of the Pure Land dharma so we can be reborn in the Land of the Ultimate Bliss. We are stocking up provisions for the future; not for solving anyone's problems. Reciting sutras can increase our wisdom. The reason you can't solve any problems including the ones you face now is that you lack sufficient wisdom. Once you have enough wisdom, you will easily resolve all problems and be clear and decisive about what to do.

**Q: When we recite the Buddha's name, does that mean we are going to leave the homelife?**

**A:** Why should reciting the Buddha's name indicate that you are going to leave home? If reciting the Buddha's name leads to leaving home, then what should monastics recite?

**Q: What is the difference between reciting Guanshiyin Bodhisattva's name and Amitabha Buddha's name? Will the result be the same?**

**A:** The moment you start differentiating, you definitely won't get any result.

**Q: While reciting the Buddha's name, people sometimes forget about everything, even forgetting to breathe. Could you tell me if this is considered drowsiness?**

**A:** Wouldn't they be better off dead? [The audience applauds]

了。請問師父，是不是業障很重才會流眼淚呢？

答：大概是覺得在外邊碰釘子碰的太多了，有點覺悟了，所以哭了。

問：如何持穩心性專心念佛？

答：少吃一點飯。

問：散亂心念佛應如何調伏？應該用什麼樣的方法？

答：念多了就不亂了。你若一日、若二日、若三日、若四日、若五日、若六日、若七日，一心不亂！你不常常念，當然散亂嘛！

問：每次誦經念佛的時候，身體會感到很熱，甚至有腫脹的感覺，這種現象是不是自性蟲子活起來的原因？

上人：自性的蟲是什麼樣子？黑的？白的？黃的？紅的？凡所有相皆是虛妄，你著這個相幹什麼？你因為緊張，才有這樣的情形；你不緊張，在那兒不矯揉造作，不會有這種感覺的。

問：請問師父，所謂一心不亂，是不是在日常生活裡處理任何事情時，心中佛號自然湧出而不間斷？

答：這個一心不亂就是念茲在茲，你用功用得上路了，這是念佛三昧。三昧，這是梵語，翻譯過來叫正定，也叫正受，正定就是異於邪定，正受是異於邪受。你能有正定正受了，一定會一心不亂，一定沒有雜念，就是這個；這並沒有什麼巧妙的地方、有什麼捷徑。我怎麼能得到一心不亂？你念多了，就一心不亂了；你不念，心怎麼會不亂呢？

問：師父！你認為將來會不會發生第三次世界大戰，在什麼時候？

答：我不知道這個事情。你念佛還不夠誠

**Q: Last week was my first time joining the recitation session, and I could not believe that I was crying. Were my tears caused by my heavy karmic obstacles?**

A: You've probably had too many unpleasant experiences in the outside world, and cried because you gained a bit of insight.

**Q: How can we strengthen our mind and be focused in reciting the Buddha's name?**

A: Eat a little less.

**Q: How do we conquer the scattered mind whenever reciting the Buddha's name? What method can we use?**

A: The more you recite, the less scattered your mind is. You should recite one day, two days, three, four, five, six, up to seven days singlemindedly! Since you recite only sporadically, of course you cannot stay focused.

**Q: Every time I recite sutras and the Buddha's name, my whole body feels hot and bloated. Is it because the beings in my nature have come alive?**

A: What do the beings of the nature look like? Are they black? White? Yellow? Red? All forms are illusory; why attach to them? It is because you are nervous that you experience such states. If you are not nervous and not pretentious, you will not feel that way.

**Q: Does being singleminded and undistracted mean that when dealing with things in daily life, the Buddha's name will spontaneously arise in our mind without interruption?**

A: Being singleminded and undistracted means reciting in thought after thought. When you become skilled in your practice, you will attain the *samadhi* of mindfulness of the Buddha. *Samadhi* is Sanskrit and is translated as right concentration and right perception. Right concentration differs from wrong concentration. Right perception differs from wrong perception. Once you achieve right concentration and perception, your mind will be singleminded and undistracted. You will not have any wandering thoughts. That is what it means. There is nothing tricky about it and there are no shortcuts. How can I acquire a focused mind that does not get distracted? When you recite the Buddha's name often, your mind will then reach the state of being focused and undistracted. If you do not recite the Buddha's name, how can your mind not get distracted?

**Q: Master, do you think there will be a third world war in the future, and when?**

A: I do not know about this. You are still not sincere enough in reciting the Buddha's name. If you were, you would not care whether there is going to be a third, fourth, fifth or sixth war. Why do you care?

心。你要夠誠心，你管它三次四次、五次六次做什麼？！

**弟子問：我們工作的時候容易傷害小生命，那怎麼辦？**

答：你不殺人就好了。小生命無意殺的，你給牠念佛。

弟子：我念佛念得不靈。

上人：念佛念得不靈，你念鬼，念你心裡的鬼。為什麼你念佛不靈？就因為你心裡有鬼。

弟子：弟子心中的鬼都趕不走，怎麼辦？

上人：(上人用杖敲弟子三下) 這個鬼快跑！okay！

**問：打坐是在念自性的佛，說「內不亂，心不動。」要念自性的佛，離開這自性的佛，沒有什麼佛好求；讀《金剛經》又說「以色見我，以音聲求我，是入行邪道，不能見如來。」我們念佛，到底是念自性的佛，還是說去求一個外在的佛菩薩來保佑，這有一個外在的佛？**

答：這個問題非常好！念佛法門，念自性佛和念他方佛是一樣的。你念自性佛就是念他方佛，念十方的佛；你念十方佛，也是念自性佛，自他不二，二而不二，你分不開的。因為佛光都是一個的，佛佛道同，光光相照的。

**問：在醫院處理臨終助念，如果行政上允許，一定要助念滿八個小時嗎？**

答：一切法都沒有定法，八個小時也不出一念，一念也不出八個小時。你真要是功夫，你就是念一句，也可以送他往生；你要沒有功夫，你就是在那兒把喉嚨念破了，也不能幫助他。

☯待續

**Q: It is easy to harm small living beings when we work. What can we do?**

A: As long as you do not kill people... if you kill small living beings unintentionally, you should recite the Buddha's name for them.

Disciple: But my reciting of the Buddha's name is not effective.

A: Your skill is poor because you are reciting a ghost. You are reciting your own ghost which is in your mind. Why is it that your recitation of the Buddha's name is not effective? It is because you have a ghost in your mind.

Q: I cannot make the ghost go away. What should I do?

Venerable Master tapped the disciple's head three times with his walking stick and said, "This ghost must go away quickly! Okay!"

**Q: When we meditate, we are mindful of the Buddha of our nature. We say, "peaceful within, mind is still." We need to be mindful of the Buddha of our nature. If we leave the Buddha of our nature, there is no other Buddha we can ask for help. The Vajra Sutra says, "Those who seek me in form or sound walk down the wrong path and cannot see the Thus Come One." When we recite the Buddha's name, are we being mindful of the Buddha of our nature or reciting the name of an external Buddha and Bodhisattva for their blessing? Is there an external Buddha?**

A: This is a very good question! The dharma door of reciting Buddha's name is the same whether you are mindful of the Buddha of your nature or an external Buddha. When you are mindful of the Buddha of your nature, you are actually being mindful of the external Buddhas and the Buddhas of the ten directions. When you are mindful of the Buddhas of the ten directions, you also being mindful of the Buddha of your nature. They are non-dual. It is two, yet not two; you cannot separate them. Because the light of Buddha is one, all Buddhas are on the same Path, and all lights mutually shine upon one another.

**Q: When helping a terminally ill person to recite in the hospital, if hospital's policy allows, must we recite the full eight hours?**

A: All dharmas are not rigid and fixed. Eight hours are encompassed within a single thought, and a single thought does not go beyond eight hours. If you have skill, even a single recitation can help send the person to the Western World; if you don't have such skill, it will not help even if you exhaust yourself and lose your voice while reciting.

☯To be continued