

# 生死在當下

—方丈恒律法師於金山聖寺念佛開示摘要

## Living And Death Are Within the Present Moment

—Excerpt of the Dharma Talk by the Abbot Heng Lyu at  
Gold Mountain Monastery

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方丈恒律法師7月22日在金山聖寺為灣區的信眾開示，北灣、中半島、東灣、南灣的信眾200餘人專程前往聽講。

這次開示的因緣，源起於宣公上人老弟子的家人病危，金山聖寺助念團多人前往助念。恒律法師當時正在香港參加世界佛教論壇，特地於會議中抽空打電話提醒助念重要事項，助念團成員因此懇請方丈前往金山聖寺為大眾詳細開示。

22日當天，律法師為信眾說明念佛及為亡者助念的要點，同時接受大眾提問。律法師指出，佛法的重點在於把握每個當下，每個當下都是新的開始，每個當下也隨時在生死中。改變生命在於把握當下，佛法不在遠處，就在身邊。生命的真相是無始無終，若時時提起正念，每一剎那都是新的因緣，我們能夠珍惜這個新的生命，就是掌握了佛法。

一位信眾的母親91歲，自認每天只是吃飯睡覺，覺得人生乏味。這名信眾問道：如何引導母親念佛？律法師認為，人有時對自己沒信心，提不起向上之心。不妨多談她這一生的貢獻，她感到自豪之事，給予肯定鼓勵，「生命的意義在於淨化內心，並幫助別人淨化自己。」

On July 22, Rev. Heng Lyu, the abbot of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas held a dharma talk at the Gold Mountain Monastery. About two hundred faithful Buddhist followers from around the North, East, and South bay areas, including the San Francisco Peninsula came to attend the special event.

The deteriorating conditions of an aging disciple of the Venerable Master actually lent the occasion for this Dharma talk. As many Buddhist followers from the GMM gathered to recite the Buddha's name for the ill disciple, Dharma Master Lyu felt it was important that the proper way to recite the Buddha's name is being followed, he specifically phoned from Hong Kong amidst his busy schedule at the world Buddhist forum, to pass along specific instructions about the Buddha's name recitation. For this reason, the members of GMM subsequently requested the abbot to conduct an in-depth dharma talk at the monastery on the same subject for the benefit of everyone.

On July 22, Rev. Heng Lyu explained the key points of both reciting the Buddha's name alone, and reciting the Buddha's name for the deceased. During his talk, the abbot addressed many questions and provided answers to the group. He further indicated that the essence of Buddhism is to seize the present moment, for every present moment is a new beginning, and that every present moment is also continuously in life and death. Therefore, changing one's destiny is also about seizing the present moment and relying on the Buddhadharmā, which does not reside in a distance and sits just alongside us. The truth of life has no beginning nor ending. As long as we maintain the right mindfulness, every moment becomes the start of a new chain of causation. If we can only cherish this new life, we would then have mastered the Buddhadharmā.

A 91 year-old mother of a disciple complained that her life consists of just eating and sleeping and she finds life extremely boring. How to encourage the mother to recite the Buddha's name, asked the daughter. Dharma Master Lyu related that, people do lack confidence at times and therefore are less motivated to strive, in this case, it is necessary to remind the mother of her significant contributions in the past, this will help her feel proud, at the same time will help generate sufficient encouragements for her to move on. "The meaning of life is to purify our inner mind and also to help others to purify themselves."

He also pointed out that we need to be mindful of the privacy of the deceased

律法師也指出為亡者助念時，應尊重亡者的隱私權，以白布蓋住亡者，助念八小時後再打開白布，助念時要專心誠心。他希望大家以正念來清淨身口意三業，才會有清淨的果報。

蓮花被是否應蓋住頭面？律法師答覆說，事前就應以恭敬柔和的態度，

跟臨命終者以及家屬說明，先在臨命終者眼前出示阿彌陀佛聖像，然後再以蓮花被蓋住亡者頭面。

法師特別強調，亡者過世後八小時內，千萬不要觸動遺體，更不要為了想知道亡者的去處而輕率摸頭等。八小時後為亡者洗澡更衣時，也要好好跟亡者說明。如果亡者生前指定要穿著一定的衣物，應該遵照他的遺願，因為這是亡者最後的要求。

家人往生時，助念者忽然哭泣，怎麼辦？法師表示，身體從出生到死亡只是成住壞空，就像機器零件壞了，再換一台，並不是不會再相見了。我們與諸佛、眾生，都是同一法身。如果有正確的知見，就不會發生這種事了。哭泣的人如果沒有正確的知見，就要輕聲安慰他，請他輕輕離開現場，不要影響大家助念。

往生者常托夢給兄弟，怎麼辦？法師答覆：「多作功德迴向，他們需要你的功德來幫助他們。」如何幫助最近往生的人？「拜佛、誦經、做善事幫助人，都可以迴向給亡者，讓亡者心生歡喜。」

臨命終時，影響往生的要素有三：重業、習氣、臨終因緣。就重業而言，有善惡兩種而言，若惡業很重，臨命終時就很辛苦，因此律法師鼓勵大家平日養成念佛的習氣，並心存善念，不要起瞋恨心，否則免疫力都會下降。就臨終因緣而言，平日就應培養善緣，助念團的作用更是十分重要。

法師建議念佛團成員平時有機會見面時，應該交換願景，分享經驗，互相鼓勵，培養默契並養成團隊精神。免得到了助念現場才開辯論會，你要這樣做，我要那樣做，就不合適了。❀

while reciting the Buddha's name. We should cover the deceased with a white cloth and remove it only after reciting the name for a duration of eight hours. We also need to remain focused and sincere during the entire recitation period. He indicated that everyone should cleanse their body, mouth, and mind with right mindfulness in order to achieve the purest effect.

As to whether the lotus flower blanket should be used to cover the face, Rev. Heng Lyu said we should explain in a polite and respectful manner to the departing individual as well as to his/her family members, the need to first show the image of Amitabha Buddha, and then cover the face of the deceased with the lotus flower blanket after the moment of death.

He reminded that the body of the deceased should not be touched within the first eight hour of his/her passing away, nor should we touch the deceased's head out of curiosity to find out where the deceased might have gone. When washing or dressing the deceased for the last time, we should also explain the procedure properly and fully honor the request of the deceased in the choice of his or her last clothing as this was the final wish of the deceased.

What to do when the family members of the deceased suddenly start sobbing while reciting the name of the Buddha? Dharma Master Lyu explained that from birth to death, the body is in a perpetual cycle of becoming, dwelling, decaying, and vanishing. The body is like an engine, we replace with a new engine when the old parts failed. This actually does not mean we will never meet again as we share the same Dharma body with all Buddhas and all beings. In reality, the sobbing would not have happened had one had the right understanding. In the event of the lack of the right understanding and the sobbing continues, we should quietly comfort and advise the family members to temporarily withdraw themselves from reciting to avoid further interruption.

What to do if the deceased appeared often in your dream? Dharma Master Lyu replied "Transfer your merits to them; they need all the merits they can get to help themselves out of the situation." What are the things we can do to benefit the recently deceased? He said "Bow to the Buddhas, recite sutras, render good deeds, and assist people. These are the activities which can be dedicated and will bring joy to the deceased.

When a person is near death, there are three factors that go in to determine his afterlife: strong karma, bad habits and the conditions before death. With regard to strong karma, there exist two kinds – good and evil ones. For individuals with heavy evil karma, the near death experience will be very difficult. Hence Dharma Master Lyu encouraged all of us to develop a good habit of reciting the Buddha's name, maintain a good mind, and avoid getting angry or hatred. This will preserve our immune system from becoming weaker. As for the conditions prior to death, we should balance our daily practice with cultivating wholesome affinities and acknowledge the important role of the recitation group.

He suggested that the members of the recitation group should gather often to improve common understanding and raise awareness, exchange experience, promote encouragement, harmony, and teamwork and to avoid the last minute disagreements or embarrassments on site. ❀