

# 雪山六月 念佛 聲聲

## Snow Mountains in June, the **Recitation** of the **Buddha's Name** Attune

凌峰文

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English Translation by Yaping Wang and Jae-Min Lee

**2** 013年6月29日，雪山寺的「佛三」法會在恒來法師主持之下，如期舉行。加拿大華嚴寺以及西雅圖金峰寺的女眾法師負責領眾，當地的信眾連同來自加拿大、加州和俄勒岡州的居士，70多人共聚一堂，同聲念佛。



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**O**n June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013, Dharma Master Heng Lai hosted the 3-day Amitabha session at Snow Mountain Monastery. A group of 70 people from the local area, Canada, California and Oregon were led by Bhikshunis from Avatamsaka Monastery and Gold Summit Monastery in gathering together to recite the Buddha's name.

Bhikshunis from both Avatamsaka Monastery in Calgary, Canada and Gold Summit Monastery, Seattle led a group of the local faithful together with laity from Canada, California and Oregon; a total of 70 people gathered together and recited Amitabha's name.



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雪山寺

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# 雪山六月 念佛 聲聲 (續)

## Snow Mountain in June, the Recitation of the Buddha's Name Attune (continued)

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DHARMA REALM NEWS | 法界音

### (續封面內頁)

依山傍水的雪山寺，坐落在西雅圖東大約一小時車程的Index小鎮。那裡群山環繞，草木蔥蘢，Snohomish河的北支奔騰而過。朝陽冉冉升起時，西面的Persis雪山披上了紅色的面紗，在雲中隱約微笑。北面的牆山（the Wall）直擊藍天，山頂蒼松翠柏，鬱鬱蔥蔥，生機盎然。這個九十度的峭壁是攀岩者的樂園，而當地的報紙「牆」（the Wall）也以此命名。

法會期間，來法師回憶起當年在這裡建造道場的因緣。1985年，來法師陪同上人驅車路過這裡時，上人突然從定而起，興奮地說：「馬上停車！去找一個房地產經紀人，幫我們在這裡找一處好地產。」來法師聽後高興地說，我的父母二戰之後就住在這裡，我就是在這兒出生的。師父聽了大笑說：「我知道你和這裡有很深的因緣，這裡是非常吉祥的地方，有眾多的山神、水神、樹神。」於是一年後，我們購置了雪山寺舊址，2011年才搬到現在的新址。

鑑於雪山寺的佛堂較小，來法師專程去萬佛城取來一個大帳篷。因此，這次法會的拜佛、誦經都在臨時搭建的大帳篷內進行，繞念則穿行於雪山寺的林間小路。晚間，女眾住在屋內，男眾則在

### (Continued from the front inner cover)

Surrounded by mountains and rivers, the Snow Mountain Monastery is located in a small town called Index, which is around an hour's drive from Seattle. It is a beautiful place surrounded by mountains and lush trees with the north fork of the Snohomish River rushing by. When the sun rises, the snowy Mount Persis to the west is veiled in red - a smiling visage that is hidden in the clouds. The Wall, a mountain to the north rises straight up to the blue sky. Green pines and cypresses at its peak seem luscious and vibrant. The steep 90° cliff is a rock climber's heaven. The local newspaper *The Wall* is named after this peak.

During the session, Dharma Master Lai recalled the causes and conditions of building the monastery here. In 1985, when Dharma Master Lai was driving the Venerable Master through the area, Venerable Master suddenly arose from samadhi and excitedly said, "Stop right now! Go and find a real estate agent to help us find a good property here." After hearing this, DM Lai happily said, "My parents lived here since World War II and I was born here." Venerable Master laughed heartily and replied, "I know that you have deep causes and conditions with this place. This is an extremely auspicious place with many mountain spirits, water spirits and tree spirits." A year later we bought the previous Snow Mountain Monastery and then moved to the current site in 2011.

Given the limited size of the Buddha Hall, Dharma Master Lai went through the effort of going to City of Ten Thousand Buddha just to get a big tent. Therefore, all the bowing and chanting during the Dharma Assembly was done in the temporary tent, while the walking recitation was conducted along the small trails in Snow Mountain Monastery's forest. In the evening, women slept indoors while men camped outside. DM Lai camped in the car, jokingly saying "The place I'm staying at is a five star hotel, it even has four doors!" At the time people were worried that it would be too cold outside. Surprisingly, the weather warmed up for a few days, making it ideal for camping. Some people were still worried about wild bear attacks. In good humor, DM Lai said "Shrfu taught us

室外露營。來法師也搬到汽車裡宿營，他戲稱說：「我住的是五星級賓館，還有四個門呢！」當時大家曾擔心，室外是否太冷？不料，那幾天氣溫陡升，正好適合露營。有人還擔心有野熊出沒，來法師幽默地說，師父教導過我們，熊有發脾氣的性，只要我們不發脾氣，熊就不會來找我們了。

法會按照萬佛城的作息時間進行。每天早上四點開始，到晚上九點半結束。上午誦〈香讚〉後，念《阿彌陀經》，然後念彌陀聖號，坐念和繞念交替，下午做大迴向。整個法會在莊嚴肅穆的氣氛中順利進行，聲聲佛號匯聚成一股連綿不斷的聲浪，在雪山寺的上空迴盪。

另外，每天還有兩次的聽法時間。恒來法師講起當年他跟隨上人去俄勒岡州佛根地農場參加「佛七」的故事。佛七的地點設在河邊，也像雪山寺一樣有成群結隊的蚊子。當時師父對我們說：「你們如果蚊子的妄想打得越多，蚊子就越會來咬你。我盡量與蚊子談判，但你如果不誠心，那就不能保證蚊子不咬你。」後來，蚊子果然不再肆虐了。來法師說，佛根地農場的蚊子個頭很大，相比之下，我們這裡的蚊子簡直就是小孩子。大家聽後，開懷大笑，也就不太在意蚊子的影響了。

三天之中，來法師有許多精彩的開示，以下摘錄幾則，以饗讀者。

**問：**念佛時是否需要配合自己的呼吸節奏？

**答：**每個人可以選擇適合自己的方法，我本人不這樣做。念佛是要讓心靜下來，不起妄想才是最重要的。用佛號把自己的妄想截斷。當你打妄想的時候，一旦提起佛號，就可以把妄想打斷。如果你念佛真的念得非常好，那阿彌陀佛就會充滿你心裡，讓你完全了知於當下，而無過去未來的任何心念。正如阿彌陀佛所言，當下此處就是淨土。只是我們這些凡夫沒有看見而已。

**問：**念佛計數好，還是不一定計數？

**答：**念佛計數是可以的，但阿彌陀佛不在乎你念了多少聲，更在乎你念得有多好，能否做到一心不亂。

**問：**我打坐有時候會睡著，這個時候我應該去睡覺，養足精神再來打坐呢？還是應該堅持，哪怕是坐著打盹？

that bears have a nature of losing their temper. As long as we don't lose our temper, the bears won't come looking for us.”

The session followed CTTB's schedule. Every day started at 4:00 am and ended at 9:30pm. In the morning, the incense praise was sung after which we recited the *Amitabha Sutra*. Following this was recitation of Amitabha's name, alternating between sitting recitation and walking recitation. In the afternoon, we did the Great Transference of Merit. The entire session was conducted smoothly with an atmosphere of adornment and sincerity. The gathering of voices sounding the Buddha's name threaded together to form a continuous wave of sound that resonated throughout the skies above Snow Mountain Monastery.

In addition, there were also two dharma talks every day. Dharma Master Lai told stories from when he went with the Venerable Master to the Amitabha Session at Buddha Root Farm in Oregon. The Farm was located by a river, and like Snow Mountain Monastery there were a ton of mosquitoes. At the time Venerable Master taught us, “The more you think false thoughts about mosquitoes, the more likely it is that they will come and bite you. I will try my best to negotiate with them, but if you are not sincere, I cannot guarantee that they will not bite you.” Later, the mosquitoes no longer bothered them. DM Lai said, “The mosquitoes in Buddha Root Farm are quite big. Compared to them, the mosquitoes here are just kids.” After hearing that, everyone laughed aloud and didn't pay too much attention to the influence of mosquitos.

During the three days, there were many wonderful insights and instructions from DM Lai. Here we selected a few for readers to enjoy.

**Question:** Do I need to match the recitation of the Buddha's name to the rhythm of my breath?

**Answer:** Each person can select a way that works for them. I myself don't use that method. The purpose of reciting Buddha's name is to calm the mind, so the most important thing is not giving rise to false thoughts. The Buddha's name is used to stop false thoughts. When the false thoughts arise, you recite the Buddha's name. By doing this you can stop the false thoughts. If you are really reciting Buddha's name well, Amitabha Buddha will completely fill your mind and you will be fully aware of the present moment without any thoughts of the past or future. As Amitabha Buddha said, this very place here and now is the Pure Land; it is just that we ordinary people fail to see it.

**Question:** Is it good to count the recitation Buddha's name or is counting unnecessary?

**Answer:** It is okay to count while you are reciting, but Amitabha Buddha doesn't care about how much you have recited. He cares more about how well you have recited—whether you have attained single-mindedness or not.

**Question:** When I am meditating, I sometimes fall asleep. Should I get some sleep and meditate later when I have enough energy, or should I keep meditating, even though I might doze off while sitting?

**答：**師父總是教導我們，打坐的時候不要完全閉上眼睛，要半睜半閉，看自己前面大約五英尺的地面上，這樣不容易打瞌睡。當年我們打禪七，一般是先打佛七，通過念佛把心靜下來，然後打禪七會比較容易些。一般人的禪定功夫不夠，很難直接進入狀態。當時我們每天參禪21小時，坐香1小時，行香20分鐘。而我本人是不離開禪堂的，因為反正已經花了這麼大的努力，為什麼還要回去睡那三個小時，讓自己的氣都散了呢？所以我是在禪堂繼續坐下去的。坐禪是要一天24小時，每週7天這樣地來參，參話頭「我是誰」。只有這樣精進，才能夠看到效果。

**問：**您是怎麼開始修行的？

**答：**我並不是通過讀書或者學習進入佛法的，我那時候根本不知道佛教是什麼。我那時在海上工作，有一個特別的經驗，我希望找到一位大師幫助我了解這件事。我讀了一些書，但也沒有收穫。很幸運，由於種種因緣，我最終找到了師父。我搬到金山寺開始修行後，就急切地想開悟，想再次經歷那個境界，腦子裡整天想著開悟。師父會走到我旁邊，問我：「你在幹什麼？」「師父，我想開悟。」「愚癡！」

總之，我非常想開悟。我在禪七的時候，每天24小時打坐。儘管有時候睡著了，醒過來，我就繼續用功。由於用功過度，我的頭腦嗡嗡作響。一次打坐時，有一個境界，看到虛雲老和尚來到我跟前，叫我的俗家名字：「Eric，平靜下來，慢慢來，你太強求了。」師父也提醒我，不要強求西紅柿過早開花，只要因緣成熟了，自然會開悟的，你的業就會顯現的。你只需要努力修行，不要貪圖境界。

**問：**您看見虛老的時候，他用什麼語言和您交流？

**答：**他講著流利的英文。他是菩薩，他可以隨緣自在示現。我們最難理解的是「一切唯心造」，我們看到的整個宇宙都是由識而現的。菩薩當然了解這一點，所以他們用這個力量，可以輕而易舉地進入你的境界中，在你的層面上和你交流。他們完全地了解了你，他們成為你，他們示現你，這是不可思

**Answer:** Shrfu always instructed us not to close our eyes completely when sitting in meditation. We should keep them half open and focused on the floor around 5 feet in front of us. This way, it is harder to fall asleep. In the old days, we would normally have an Amitabha session before the Chan Meditation session. The mind would be calmed by recitation of the Buddha's name, after which the Chan Meditation session becomes easier. Ordinary people don't have enough skill in meditative concentration, so it is very difficult to directly enter such a state. At that time, we investigated Chan for 21 hours, alternately sitting for 1 hour and walking for 20 minutes. For me, I didn't leave the Chan Hall at all because since I had spent so much effort already, why would I go back to my room to sleep for those 3 hours and scatter my energy? I continued to sit in the Chan hall. Sitting in meditation requires 24 hours in a day, 7 days a week of investigating the topic "Who am I?"; only this kind of diligence can bring the effects and results.

**Question:** How did you begin your cultivation?

**Answer:** I did not enter the Buddha Dharma by reading books or studying. At the very beginning, I had no understanding of Buddhism was. I was working out at sea when I had a special experience. I hoped to find a great master to help me understand that experience. I read few books but I didn't get much out of them. Luckily, due to various causes and conditions, I finally found Shrfu. After moving to Gold Mountain Monastery and starting to cultivate, I was eager to get enlightenment. I wanted to experience that state again. I was thinking about getting enlightened in my head all day. Shrfu came up to me and asked: "What are you doing?"

"Shrfu, I want to get enlightened".

"Stupid!"

In short, I really wanted to get enlightened. During the Chan Session, I sat in meditation 24 hours every day. Though I fell asleep sometimes, I woke up and continued my efforts. I tried so hard that my mind was buzzing. Once when I was sitting in meditation, I encountered a state in which Venerable Master Hsuyun (Empty Cloud) appeared in front of me and called me by my lay name: "Eric, calm down, take your time, you are too impatient." Shrfu also reminded me not to expect the tomatoes to bloom too early. Once the causes and conditions are matured, you will naturally get enlightened. Your karma will manifest. All you need to do is work hard at cultivating without desiring states.

**Question:** When you saw Venerable Master Hsuyun, which language did he use to communicate with you? (Note: Master Hsuyun was Chinese, 1840-1951, and probably didn't speak English.)

**Answer:** He spoke English fluently. He is a Bodhisattva so he is able to manifest at ease according to conditions. The most difficult thing for us to understand is "Everything is made by mind alone." The whole universe we see is manifested by our consciousness. Bodhisattvas certainly understand this point so they utilize this power to easily enter your states and communicate with you at your level. They completely understand you, they become you, and they manifest you. This is inconceivable. They know

議的，他們知道你所有的秘密。

當我面對師父的時候，我從來不加掩飾。很好笑的是，有很多弟子在師父面前有所藏匿。我說這些人真是愚癡，師父可以輕而易舉地知道他們的心思。師父有時候也很方便，假裝自己根本不知道，其實他完全了知他們的動機。師父曾經多次告訴我：「我來這裡就是為了造佛的，讓他們看到自己本有佛性。除此之外，沒有其他任何別的目的。」

**問：**應該如何參話頭？初學好像就是不斷地重複念「誰、誰、誰」。

**答：**剛開始容易犯的錯誤，就是不斷地重複念「誰」。參禪不是念誦，不需要念任何東西。念佛的時候，我們不斷地念「阿彌陀佛」，用它來打斷我們的妄想，這是一種方便法。參禪則是解謎題，解「我是誰」這個謎題——「我是誰？」——「誰剛剛問了這個問題？」——「是誰？」——要解開這個無法解開的謎題。這是你要努力做的事情。



**問：**當時上人對早期的弟子主要是教參禪，後來才大量使用拜懺、念經等法門。是不是因為後來的弟子根性不夠呢？

**答：**上人說過，除非你開悟了，否則你根本不知道自己的根器到底如何！此生能夠遇到佛法，就已經是有很大的善根了。你只需要努力精進，不必去管其他。有些人說自己根器不夠，從而不努力。那只是給自己偷懶找一個藉口而已。

**問：**一切都是虛妄的，那麼「業」是否也是虛妄的？

**答：**「業」是虛妄的，也不是虛妄的。我

all your secrets.

When I was with Shrfu, I never tried to conceal faults. The funny thing is that a lot of disciples concealed things before Shrfu. I would say that those people were truly ignorant, because Shrfu easily knew their thoughts. Sometimes, Shrfu was quite expedient, pretending that he didn't know at all even though he actually knew their intentions completely. Shrfu told me several times, "The purpose of my coming here is to make Buddhas; to guide beings in seeing that they have inherent Buddha nature. Beyond this, there is no other goal."

**Question:** How should the topic be investigated? For a beginner, it seems to be repeatedly reciting "Who? Who? Who?"

**Answer:** It is easy to make the mistake of reciting "Who?" repeatedly when you just start. Investigating Chan is not a recitation - you don't need to recite anything. When reciting the Buddha's name, we recite "Amitabha" without ceasing to stop our false thoughts. This is a kind of Dharma of



expedient means. Investigating Chan is more like solving a riddle; solving the riddle of "Who am I?"—"Who am I?", "Who just asked this question?", "Who is that?". You need to solve this unsolvable riddle. This is what you must work on with effort.

**Question:** Shrfu focused on teaching investigating Chan to his early disciples, and only later used a large number of Dharma doors such as Repentance Bowing, sutra recitation and others. Is that because the later disciples were insufficient in their potentials?

**Answer:** Shrfu has said that unless you get enlightened, you will not know the reaches of your own potentials. Your ability to encounter the Buddhadharma in this life time shows that you already have great roots of goodness. You only need to work diligently, nothing else. Some people say that their potentials are insufficient so they don't put in much effort. That is just giving an excuse for your laziness.

**Question:** Since everything is illusion, is karma also illusory?

**Answer:** Karma is both an illusion and not an illusion. We, ordinary people consider everything in a dualistic way so that we feel that this principle is inconceivable. If we make effort in cultivating, we will get enlightened and be able to see all the connections between karmas. We will be able to see what is true and what is untrue. At that time, you don't need

們凡夫思考問題都是二元的，因此對此覺得不可思議。我們如果努力修行，一旦開悟，就會看到所有的「業」之間的聯繫，可看到何者為真，何者不真。到那時不需要佛來告訴你什麼了，因為你已與佛處於同一頻道。佛說人人都有佛性，只要認真修行，都可以開悟。開悟的眾生是非常自在的。

**問：**善根是什麼？如何培養善根？

**答：**我們在任何時候做任何事，都是在種各種根。我們從無量劫以來，在龐大的本體中，或種善根，或種惡根。師父常講，在這世能遇到佛法，就說明你過去世種過善根。因此，做善事、不求回報地幫助他人都是在培養善根，誦經、念佛也是如此。念佛有二個好處，一個明顯的好處就是幫你靜下心來，就像參禪；一個隱秘的好處就是幫助你與阿彌陀佛建立起因緣，將來在往生路上你就會得到阿彌陀佛的幫助。

**問：**有人一直在念阿彌陀佛名號，為何臨終時還是那麼恐慌？

**答：**每個人水平各不同、功夫有深淺，善根、因緣也各不相同，這些都會影響到臨終情況。師父經常告誡我們，不用管別人修得如何，要迴光返照，關心自己修行的事。但是，念佛一定是功不唐捐的。

**問：**是不是要完全斷除妄想才能夠往生極樂世界，還是臨終念佛一聲就可以去了？

**答：**關鍵在於集中心念在阿彌陀佛上面，不要擔心你的妄想。有人說，阿彌陀佛來的時候會是非常明亮的光，而有些人的業障是如此地重，他們不能夠接受這樣明亮的光。念佛基本上需要兩個條件，一是誠心，這個並不容易做到；二是念念都在阿彌陀佛上面。而且你不需要關心自己能否往生到極樂世界，那個不應該是你應該關心的問題。你需要做的就是念佛，不要擔心其他的事情。正如阿彌陀佛說的，此處就是淨土。如果你能夠真正看到這一點，你就已經在淨土了。

**問：**怎麼知道見到的人是不是菩薩化身，菩薩會再來嗎？

**答：**大部分去了極樂世界的人，都會發願再回來度眾生，他們以種種的形相出現。所以要

the Buddha to tell you anything, because you are on the same page as the Buddha. Buddha said that everyone has Buddha nature; all of us only need to cultivate earnestly to get enlightened. Those living beings who get enlightened are fully at ease.

**Question:** What are “roots of goodness”? How can they be nurtured?

**Answer:** Whatever we do at any time is planting different roots. Since endless eons ago, within the vast matrix, we have planted either good roots or bad roots. Shrfu always said, “Encountering Buddhadharmā in this life means that you have planted roots of goodness in past lives. So doing good deeds and helping others without seeking a reward nurture roots of goodness. Reciting sutras and the Buddha’s name does the same. There are two benefits of reciting the Buddha’s name: the obvious one is that it helps quiet the mind, like investigating Chan; the hidden benefit is that it helps build a connection of causes and conditions between you and Amitabha Buddha. In the future, you will receive Amitabha Buddha’s help while on your path of rebirth.

**Question:** Why is it that some people continuously recite Amitabha Buddha’s name, yet are still so panic-stricken at the time of death?

**Answer:** Each person is at a different level, their skills deep or shallow, their roots of goodness, and causes and conditions are varied. All of these could influence the situation at the time of death. Shrfu kept teaching us not to focus on others’ cultivation. We should always reflect upon ourselves and care about our own cultivation. But there is definitely merit in reciting the Buddha’s name; it is not for naught.

**Question:** Do we need to totally stop false thoughts to be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss, or can we go there by just reciting the name of the Buddha once at the time of death?

**Answer:** The key is to recite Amitabha Buddha with a focused mind. Don’t worry about your false thoughts. Someone said “When Amitabha Buddha comes, he will illuminate you with an extremely bright light. However, there are some people whose karmic obstacles are so heavy that they cannot receive such bright light.” There are two basic requisites for reciting the Buddha’s name. The first is a sincere mind, which is not easy to have. The second is to focus on Amitabha with each thought. You don’t need to concern yourself about whether you will be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss or not. That is not what you should be concerned about. All you need to do is recite the Buddha’s name and not worry about other things. As Amitabha Buddha said, this very place is the Pure Land. If you are truly able to see this point, you are already in the Pure Land.

**Question:** How can we know if a person we meet is a transformation body of a Bodhisattva, or a Bodhisattva who has returned (from the Pure Land)?

**Answer:** Most of the people who go to the Land of Ultimate Bliss will make a vow to come back and cross over beings, manifesting themselves in various forms. So we should treat everyone we meet well, never looking down on the tramp we meet, for he might be the transformation body

of a Bodhisattva. As Shrfu always mentioned, “Everything is a test to see what you will do. If you fail to recognize what is before you, you will have to start anew.”

I had such an experience. When I was at City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, I needed to commute between CTTB and San Francisco. I once had the great idea to buy a motorcycle to save gasoline. After getting permission from Shrfu, I bought a motorcycle, and always galloped along the wild roads. One day, I met an old Native American; he was dressed in traditional Native American clothes, standing in the middle of the road, waving his hands to slow me down. He said “Slow down! There is some oil on the road ahead. You need to be more careful!” After returning safely, I told this story to Shrfu. He said with a smile: “He is not just any Native American; how could you fail to recognize Guan Yin Bodhisattva when you met him?”

善待你遇到的一切人，千萬不要小看你遇到的流浪漢，他可能就是菩薩的化身，正如師父常說的：「一切是考驗，看爾怎麼辦？觀面若不識，須再從頭煉。」

我自己就有這樣的一次經歷：當時在萬佛城的時候，我需要往返於萬佛城和舊金山之間。一次我想到一個好主意，我可以買一輛摩托車以便節省汽油。得到師父的允許後，我就買了一輛摩托車，常常在蜿蜒的小路上奔馳。一天我在路上遇到一位印第安人，他穿著傳統的印第安人的裝束，站在馬路中間，揮手讓我慢下來，說：「前面路上有油，你要多加小心！」我平安回去後，跟師父報告了這件事。師父笑著說：「他不是什麼印第安人，你怎麼連觀世音菩薩也不認得呀！」

雪山寺的佛三於7月1日圓滿結束。卡加利百年未遇的洪水、法會期間的陣陣熱浪，都不能夠影響信眾的精進修行。佛三期間，來法師智慧風趣的開示，猶如從雪山上吹來的陣陣涼風，讓法會信眾燥熱頓消，法喜充滿。願大家都能

夠乘此法益，勇猛精進，早證菩提！❁

Snow Mountain Monastery's Amitabha Session concluded successfully on July 1st. Not even Calgary's worst flood in 100 years or the heat wave during the session could affect the diligent cultivation of the faithful. The humorous and wise talks of Dharma Master Lai during the session were like a cool breeze blowing from the snow mountain. It took away the heat for the assembly's faithful and filled them with the joy of Dharma. Through this Dharma's benefits, may everyone cultivate courageously and diligently, and soon realize Bodhi. ❁

