

今晚我想和大眾分享的是我來聖城常住的一些變化。

第一個變化，是讀誦《阿彌陀經》的變化。之前，我對誦經有非常強烈的個人偏好，我喜歡讀誦《金剛經》，在誦經方面我覺得只有持誦《金剛經》才算是修行，其他經典只是把它們作為課本用來去了解其中的道理。所以當參加大殿的晚課時，幾乎每天誦持《阿彌陀經》，我心中就起了煩惱。我想我能從《彌陀經》中學到些什麼呢？為什麼要天天念誦呢？

在讀誦《金剛經》時，對自己來說，《金剛經》中的每一句話都包含了無窮的涵義，不論重複讀多少遍，都不斷地會有新的體會。從



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BODHI FIELD | 菩提田

坦桑尼亞文
By Tanzania

開篇起，「爾時世尊食時，著衣持鉢，入舍衛大城乞食」，一直到「飯食訖，收衣鉢，洗足已，敷座而坐」，總是讓我覺得心曠神怡。彷彿時空已挪到兩千年前的祇園，微風時時吹動著菩提葉，世尊坐在菩提樹下，為諸比丘及與會大眾，靜靜地講述空的道理。

可是一打開《彌陀經》，即將上演的是黃金大地、琉璃、磲磔、瑪瑙，各種雜色小鳥、東南西北十方諸佛都現身，出廣長舌相，齊聲讚歎這片淨土，好熱鬧啊！我想讀一遍知道一下情況就可以了，可是《彌陀經》卻被列在晚課中，每隔一天就要定時讀誦一次。起初，我心中是極不情願的。每次打開《彌陀經》，我感到自己的心中充滿了煩躁、鬱悶、無法忍耐和抵觸的情緒。

這樣的情緒一度非常強烈，我很苦惱，為什麼我不喜歡讀《阿彌陀經》呢？我的心結無

Tonight I'd like to share some changes in me after living at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

The first change was in my attitude toward reciting *The Buddha Speaks of Amitabha Sutra*. Previously, while I had a strong preference for reciting sutras, I only liked reciting *The Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra*. I thought that only reciting this sutra could be considered as cultivation, while other sutras could only be useful as textbooks in order to understand the principles. Therefore my affliction intensified because we chant *the Amitabha Sutra* almost every day during evening recitations. I thought, "What can I learn from this sutra? Why do we have to recite it every day?"

When I read *the Vajra Sutra*, each line in it has limitless meaning to me. No matter how many times I recite it, I always have a new understanding. From the beginning of the text, "At that time, at mealtime, the World Honored One put on his robe, took up his bowl, and entered the great city of Sravasti to beg for food" to "... ate the food, put away his robe and bowl, washed his feet, arranged his seat, and sat down", these lines always make me happy. I feel as if I were back at the Jeta Grove two thousand years ago: the breeze sweetly brushing over the bodhi leaves while the Buddha was sitting under the bodhi tree, expounding the principles of emptiness peacefully for the Bhikshus and the assembly.

However, when I opened *the Amitabha Sutra*, I was going to read about ground made of pure gold, lapis lazuli, mother-of-pearl, carnelian, various varicolored birds, and the Buddhas of ten directions bringing forth the appearances of a vast and long tongue, praising this pure land together. I thought how busy it was and that reading it once would be enough since it seemed to only describe what it was like in Amitabha's Pure Land. But this sutra is included in evening recitations so we have to recite it every other day regularly. At first, I was really reluctant to do it and as a result every time I opened *the Amitabha Sutra*, I was filled

法解開。不管如何，總是要隨眾做晚課，隨著時間的推移，我也漸漸忘記自己的喜歡還是不喜歡。大約過了一年半左右的時間，有一天和平時一樣做晚課，打開《阿彌陀經》時，情況發生了變化。咦！怎麼突然變明亮了？我才猛然意識到，誦經時，曾經縈繞在心中的那種煩躁與沉悶不見了。從那以後，我發現自己做晚課念誦《彌陀經》時，開始進入一種較為穩定的狀態。

這種狀態是比較明亮而且寧靜的，時常會有淡淡的喜悅；尤其是在誦到諸大阿羅漢的名號和七寶池、八功德水這裏，不會再受琉璃、碑磬、瑪瑙，或雜色小鳥這些字句的影響。晚課時，大殿人多、人少幾乎不影響到自己的心境。這種明亮而且寧靜的心境，與晚間最後的〈淨土文〉：「阿彌陀佛，願以淨光照我，慈誓攝我……」相照應。這種狀態一直持續到現在，也沒有再出現過起伏了。我多少是覺得有些驚喜的，因為心頭終於卸下一個讓自己覺得沉重的包袱，這個包袱就是——我喜歡讀這本經，不喜歡讀那本經。

一年半，365天加182天等於547天，大約是547天連續不間斷的熏習，才使內在發生了這種轉變。我起初想，這是天天讀經，量變到了質變，要換著自己在家裏做功課，第一天就關門大吉了，永遠不會再去主動打開《彌陀經》的，更不可能持續547天都讀誦這本經典。後來更意識到這一年半中，不只是讀誦《彌陀經》這一件事情，這一年半中，在道場還做了很多工呢！還有早課、拜懺和法會，再加上不間斷的迴向和懺悔。如此滿滿的一年半，才卸下了一些些的執著，真是不容易啊！

接下來的變化，是讀誦《華嚴經》的變化。在沒有來道場常住之前，我個人的喜好是讀《金剛經》和《楞嚴經》。有時候《楞嚴經》中所描述的一段或幾段經文，在《金剛經》中一句話就全包涵了；有時候，讀《金剛經》時，一句簡單的經文，忽然發現在《楞嚴經》的某處有詳細的解釋。常常覺得很妙、很歡喜的。來到道場以後，就要隨眾讀誦每天早上七點到八點的《華嚴經》。其

with anxiety, gloom, impatience, and aversion.

At one point, these kind of feelings were very strong and I was very upset: “Why don’t I like reading *the Amitabha Sutra*?” I couldn’t untie this knot in my mind. However, no matter what, I had to participate in evening recitations with the assembly. As time went by I gradually forgot my likes and dislikes. Then one day about a year and a half later, during evening recitation, I opened *the Amitabha Sutra* and realized things had changed. The anxiety and dullness I had regarding the Sutra were absent. Why did it brighten up suddenly? Since then, I found that I enter a relatively stable state of mind while chanting the sutra.

The state is bright and peaceful, accompanied with a light joy, especially when reading the description about the names of the great Arhats, the pools of the seven jewels and the eight waters of merit and virtue. The descriptions of lapis lazuli, mother-of-pearl, carnelian and various varicolored birds don’t affect me like they did when I first started. In addition, the number of people in the Buddha hall at evening recitations doesn’t affect me either. This bright and peaceful state accords with the Praise to Amitabha Buddha at the end of every evening: “Amitabha Buddha, please shine your pure light upon me and gather me in with your compassionate vows...” This mind state is lasting and it hasn’t changed since then. It was a delightful surprise to me since I finally laid down a heavy burden – my likes and dislikes for different sutras.

One and a half years: 365 days plus 182 days equals 547 days. Under the continuous influence of about 547 days, this transformation was made possible. At first I thought it was because I recited it everyday and therefore quantity changes led to quality changes. But, if I were to recite it at home alone, I would have stopped recitation after the very first day. I would have never wanted to open *the Amitabha Sutra* again and would not have kept chanting this sutra for 547 days. Then I realized, during these one and a half years, not only did I chant *the Amitabha Sutra*, but I also did a lot of volunteer work here! I also participated in morning recitations, bowing repentances and Dharma assemblies, plus continuous dedication of merit and repentances. With such a fulfilling year and a half, I was able to shake off a little bit of attachment. How difficult it was!

The second change was in my attitude toward chanting *the Avatamsaka Sutra*. I used to enjoy chanting *the Vajra Sutra* and *the Shurangama Sutra* before I came to stay here. I noticed that sometimes one single sentence in *the Vajra Sutra* covered one or multiple paragraphs in *the Shurangama Sutra*, and sometimes a detailed explanation could be found in *the Shurangama Sutra* on one simple line from *the Vajra Sutra*. I thought they were very wondrous and I felt joyful. After I came to CTTB, I joined in the practice of chanting *the Avatamsaka Sutra* during the morning session from 7 to 8am every day. Frankly speaking, I was a bit reluctant in the beginning.

If you only read a sutra for a few times, you may not get much benefit from it. Even for reading a worldly book, we have the saying that “Its meaning will manifest by itself if you read a book for a hundred times”.

實，一開始我的心中也是有些不情願的。

每部經典倘若只讀幾遍，都未必會讀出效果；就連讀世間的書，也有這樣的說法：「讀書百遍，其義自現。」一開始讀《華嚴經》時，我的面前就好像有一道無形的屏蔽，只見其字，不見其義。我心中就開始覺得很無奈。我想：「誒！《楞嚴經》還沒有明白，就要讀《華嚴經》了；定還沒有得，為什麼要跳過去研究慧的境界呢？」但是轉念一想，這是上人安排的功課表，其中不會有任何差錯的，我還是不會自己自作聰明比較好。

大約讀了一年左右的時間，情況又開始發生變化。我開始覺得《華嚴經》真是太妙！太妙！太妙了！籠統地來講，讀誦《華嚴經》正是在幫助我了解普賢菩薩十大願的第二條「稱讚如來」和第五條「隨喜功德」。佛的浩浩功德，盡虛空、遍法界，小如微塵的我，如何用自己的一雙肉眼去窺探佛的功德呢？因為佛的功德太大，大到無形無相，所以信佛難。

佛有多大？經書上寫到：三千大千世界都在毗盧遮那佛的一個毛孔中。那麼一個凡人，如何在他的內心中與佛建立起緊密的聯繫呢？一開始，我嘗試用憶念父母的功德來憶念佛。讀過《父母恩重難報經》，得以知道父母對子女的恩德，做子女的傾盡全力，盡一生也無法報答的。

在讀了一年早上七點到八點的《華嚴經》後，我漸漸發現，整部《華嚴經》就像是在描述一位佛的成佛史，它幫助我較深層地去了解一位佛名號的功德。比如說，我平時持誦阿彌陀佛的聖號，在讀《華嚴經》時，就像在讀阿彌陀佛他是怎麼行菩薩道，做過什麼？想過什麼？這樣他就從一位無形無相的佛，變成了一位有血有肉的修行人了。

When I first started reading *the Avatamsaka Sutra*, it was like I was being blocked by an invisible wall; I could only see the characters but not the meanings. So I started to feel a bit helpless. I thought, “Ah, I have not yet understood *the Shurangama Sutra*, and now I have to chant *the Avatamsaka Sutra*. I haven’t obtained samadhi yet; why should I skip this stage to study the states of wisdom?” But my second thought told me that this was a schedule arranged by the Venerable Master, so it wouldn’t be wrong. I’d better not regard myself as the smarter one.

After chanting *the Avatamsaka Sutra* for about a year, something started to change. I started to feel that *the Avatamsaka Sutra* is so wondrous! Wondrous indeed! Generally speaking, chanting *the Avatamsaka Sutra* helps me to understand the second and the fifth of the ten great vows of the Universal Worthy Bodhisattva, namely “to make praises to the Thus Come Ones” and “to rejoice and follow in merit and virtue”, respectively. The great merit and virtue of the Buddhas pervades empty space and the Dharma Realm. Being tiny like a speck of fine dust, how can I see such merit and virtue with my own naked eyes? Buddhas’ merit and virtue is so vast that it has no shape or form, so it is difficult for one to truly comprehend the Buddhas’ merit and virtue.

How large is a Buddha? The sutra says the three thousand great thousand worlds are all within one pore of Vairochana Buddha. Then how could one ordinary person establish a deep connection with the Buddha? At first I tried to recall the Buddha by recalling my parents’ merit and virtue. From *the Sutra of the Difficulty of Repaying Parents’ Kindness*, we know that the kindness from parents is so tremendous that we cannot completely repay them even if we make every effort to do so throughout our entire life.

After a year of chanting *the Avatamsaka Sutra* for an hour every morning, I started to notice that the entire *Avatamsaka Sutra* is like describing one’s history of becoming a Buddha. It helped me to understand a Buddha’s merit and virtue on a deeper level. For example, I recite Amitabha Buddha’s name in my daily life. When I am chanting *the Avatamsaka Sutra*, it is like I am reading about how Amitabha Buddha practiced the Bodhisattva conducts, what he has done, and what he has thought. In this way my mental image of Amitabha transforms from a shapeless and formless Buddha into a vivid cultivator.