

為母親祈福的念佛之路

A Journey of Buddha-Recitation in Prayer for My Mother

葉果領2025年3月28日講於萬佛聖城佛殿
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A Talk by Yeh Guo Ling at the Buddha Hall of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas on March 28, 2025
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首先，談到我開始念佛的因緣。那是在1989年，我有機會到一位醫生家中，聆聽一位博士講授佛法。他談到自己每天持誦多少佛號，也講了許多佛法道理，但我當時完全聽不明白，唯一記住的就是「要念佛」。結束後，他送了我一條念珠，我便帶回家，每天代母親念一萬聲「阿彌陀佛」聖號。

那段時間，我白天去上學，晚上就從十點念到凌晨一點。心裏全是為了母親——我怕她出入不安全、身體不健康，便一心祈求阿彌陀佛保佑她平安順利、遠離災難，願一切災殃化為塵埃，也希望她壽終之時能無障礙地往生西方極樂世界。

Let me start by sharing how I began reciting the Buddha's name. It was 1989, and I had the opportunity to visit a doctor's home to hear a scholar give a talk on the Dharma. He spoke about his daily practice of reciting the Buddha's name and explained many Buddhist principles, though at the time, I didn't truly understand them. The only thing that stuck with me was: "Recite the Buddha's name." When the talk ended, he gave me a strand of prayer beads. I took them home and began reciting "Amitabha Buddha" ten thousand times every day, dedicating the merit to my mother.

During that period, I attended school by day, and at night, I recited from ten o'clock until one in the morning. My heart was entirely devoted to my mother. I constantly worried about her health and her safety whenever she left the house. I prayed single-mindedly to Amitabha Buddha to protect her, to keep her safe from disaster, to dissolve all misfortunes, and to ensure that when her life eventually came to an end, she would be reborn in the Western Pure Land without any obstacles.

就這樣念了幾個月後，突然連續三天做了同樣的夢：夢裏有個黑箱子，旁邊站著一位胖胖的女子，一條腿受了傷，周圍還有許多鬼魂要來帶她走。他們對我說，這人陽壽雖未盡，但因生了重病，必須先帶走她。而這女子，正是我的二姑——她之前摔斷了腿，卻沒去看醫生，只用草藥敷裹、布條捆紮，後來引發敗血症，第三天就在上廁所時倒地去世了。

夢境一再出現，我趕緊打電話回家詢問。結果才知道是姑姑過世了。於是，我從美國趕回台灣送姑姑最後一程，之後因緣際會得到一張免費機票，讓我能回到萬佛城參加佛七與禪七。

就這樣，我持續念佛，日復一日地念著。為母親念了十幾年，已記不清具體多少年了，但我每天堅持代她念誦一萬遍佛號。漸漸地，她的身體越來越好，心情也越來越安寧，直到最後離世時，也沒有受到病痛的折磨。

我的念佛體會是：用嘴念，用耳聽，用心記。每天堅持念誦，每天禮佛——倒也不必日日都拜，但一週大約會拜五、六天。既是為母親懺悔、為眾生懺悔，也是為自己懺悔。因為我們的身口意，每天都在造業。

念佛時，你可以覺察自己的殺盜淫等身業——有時我們會有意無意想要傷害眾生，說話刻薄，但依靠念佛、拜佛的力量，你會慢慢變得慈悲，不敢再傷害生命；說話也會更加

After several months of this practice, I suddenly had the same dream three nights in a row. In the dream, there was a black box standing beside a plump woman with an injured leg. She was surrounded by ghosts who had come to take her away. They told me that although her natural lifespan was not yet over, they had to take her early because she had fallen gravely ill. It turned out that the woman was my second aunt. She had broken her leg some time before, but instead of seeing a doctor, she had simply applied herbal medicine and wrapped the injury in cloth. This led to sepsis, and on the third day, she collapsed in the bathroom and passed away.

As the dream kept recurring, I quickly called home to ask about my family. Only then did I learn that my aunt had indeed died. I immediately rushed back from the United States to Taiwan to see her off one last time. Afterwards, through a fortunate turn of events, I received a free plane ticket that allowed me to return to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas to participate in both the Buddha-recitation and Chan meditation sessions.

From then on, I continued reciting the Buddha's name day after day. I maintained this practice on my mother's behalf for over ten years—I've lost count of exactly how many—but I persisted in reciting ten thousand times every single day. Gradually, her health improved, and her mind became increasingly peaceful. When she finally passed away, she went without the suffering of illness.

My personal experience with Buddha-recitation comes down to this: recite with your mouth, listen with your ears, and keep it in your heart. Persist in reciting daily. I also recommend bowing to the Buddha every day, though it doesn't have to be perfect; I usually managed to bow five or six days a week. I view this as an act of repentance—on behalf of my mother, on behalf of all beings, and for myself—because with our body, speech, and mind, we create karma every single day.

When you recite the Buddha's name, you become aware of the unwholesome actions of the body: killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. Sometimes, whether intentionally or unintentionally, we harbor a desire to harm living beings or speak harshly. However, by relying on the power of recitation and bowing to the Buddha, you gradually become more compassionate and simply lose the desire to harm life. Your speech becomes more mindful, and you no longer wish to hurt others. As for greed, anger, and ignorance, these habitual tendencies will also slowly fade as your body, speech, and mind grow increasingly pure through continuous bowing and recitation.

We often find bowing to the Buddha difficult because our bodies are not accustomed to it. Our “cellular memory” holds no habit of

謹慎，不願傷害他人。而貪瞋癡這些習氣，也會在持續禮佛的過程中，隨著身口意業越來越清淨而漸漸淡去。

我們往往覺得拜佛很不容易，因為身體不習慣，細胞記憶裏缺少拜佛的動作，稍微拜一下就累，容易放棄。我有一個好方法是借助錄音帶輔助，例如我曾經拜的錄音帶〈拜佛一炷香〉，全長約四十五分鐘，其中二十到二十五分鐘用來拜佛，接著十五分鐘繞佛，最後十分鐘靜坐念佛。

你可以邊念佛邊拜佛——剛開始或許拜三百拜、五百拜就覺得累，打坐時也可能昏沉瞌睡。但持續拜久了，不僅精神越來越好，不再昏睡，業障也漸漸消除。

要念到內心清淨、妄念很少，通常需要三到五年的時間，甚至更久——這取決於你投入多少工夫、多少心力。倘若你能摒除一切世俗雜緣，不外出聚會玩樂，也不參與其他共修活動，專心一意地念佛，或許三五年就能達到「降伏煩惱、止息妄念」的境界。

要做到這樣，一天必須念佛十六到十八個小時，持續三到五年。如果每天只念兩三個小時，那可能要幾十年，甚至更長的時間。

因此，我們必須精進念佛——為了眾生、為了父母、為了報恩，我們都應當努力用功。

這屬於「行」的方面。在「理」上也要通達，我們需要了解佛法，特別是淨土五經：《佛說阿彌陀經》《佛說觀無量壽佛經》《佛說無量壽佛經》《大勢至菩薩念佛圓通章》以及《普賢行願品》。這些經典應當認真聽聞、學習，才能真誠發願求生西方極樂世界。所以，單單念佛拜佛還不夠，必須聽經聞法。

如《佛說阿彌陀經》所言：「若一日、若二日……若七日，一心不亂，其人臨命終時，阿彌陀佛與諸聖眾現在其前，是人終時，心不顛倒，即得往生阿彌陀

bowing, so we tire easily and are quick to give up. A good method I use is to follow a recorded guide. For example, I used a recording called “Bowing for One Stick of Incense.” It lasts about forty-five minutes: roughly twenty-five minutes of bowing, followed by fifteen minutes of walking circumambulation, and finally ten minutes of sitting quietly to recite the Buddha’s name.

You can recite while you bow. In the beginning, you may feel exhausted after just three or five hundred bows, and when you sit in meditation, you may feel drowsy. But if you persist over time, your energy will improve, the drowsiness will vanish, and your karmic obstacles will gradually be eliminated.

Reaching a point where the mind is pure and false thoughts are few usually takes three to five years, or perhaps longer. It depends entirely on your effort and sincerity. If you can set aside all worldly distractions—no entertainment, no social gatherings, and no mixing of practices—and focus single-mindedly on reciting the Buddha’s name, you may reach the state of “subduing afflictions and stopping false thoughts” within three to five years.

However, to achieve this, one must recite sixteen to eighteen hours a day. If you recite for only two or three hours a day, it may take decades to reach that state.

Therefore, we must be diligent in our recitation. For the sake of all beings, for our parents, and to repay the kindness shown to us, we must make earnest efforts in our practice.

This covers the aspect of practice. On the level of principle, we must also have a clear understanding. We need to study the Buddhadharmā, specifically the five Pure Land Sutras: the *Amitabha Sutra*, the *Contemplation Sutra*, the *Infinite Life Sutra*, the *Chapter on the Perfect Penetration of Great Strength Bodhisattva*, and the *Chapter on the Vows and Conduct of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva*. These sutras should be studied and listened to carefully so that we can sincerely make the vow to be reborn in the Western Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss. Therefore, bowing and reciting alone are not enough—we must also listen to and learn the Dharma.

As the *Amitabha Sutra* says: “Whether for one day, two days... up to seven days, if one recites with single-mindedness and no confusion, then when this person is about to die, Amitabha Buddha and the assembly of sages will appear

佛極樂國土。」這意味著要一天二十四小時念佛不息，一旦睡著便落入無明。若能真正做到二十四小時念佛不斷，往生西方極樂世界的機會就會大大增加。

在打佛七期間，是有可能做到的。白天跟著大眾念佛、拜佛、靜坐，晚上則利用時間繼續拜佛。這樣持續兩三天，每個佛七都如此用功，時機成熟時，佛菩薩自會給予通知，告知你在幾年幾月後將往生極樂世界。

由此可知，求生西方極樂世界，實在需要非常精進。即便念到沒有妄念，仍要持續念下去，讓自己的品級不斷提升。眾生太苦了，如果我們不發心救度，他們只會更苦。所以我們必須非常認真，精進、再精進！

我們應當避免造作惡業，不隨意批評人事行為。業障少了，心就容易安定，打坐也會更順利。如果念佛已能沒有妄念，那麼打坐時便能一炷香接著一炷香，從早坐到中午——心裏沒有那麼多惡念，打坐自然容易，清淨心的狀態下用功是非常平穩的。

所以，二十四小時念佛和打坐，本質上是相通的，都能達到非常清淨的境界。我以前以為只有念阿彌陀佛才是清淨心，其實做早課念「消災延壽藥師佛」也是清淨心，白天誦《華嚴經》同樣是清淨心，哪裏有分別呢？並沒有分別。「一就是多，多就是一。」

修行，就是為了對治我們的執著、分別與愚癡。但在功夫尚未純熟之前，還是應當一門深入、長期薰修，不要學得太雜。太多法門，反而容易失去方向。今天就分享到這裏。阿彌陀佛! ❀

before him. When one's life comes to an end, one's mind will not be inverted, and one will immediately be reborn in Amitabha Buddha's Land of Ultimate Bliss."

This passage implies that one should recite the Buddha's name without interruption, twenty-four hours a day. The moment you fall asleep, you slip into ignorance. However, if you can truly maintain uninterrupted Buddha-recitation day and night, your chances of rebirth in the Western Pure Land increase greatly.

During a "Buddha-recitation" session, this is actually possible. By day, you recite, bow, and meditate with the assembly; by night, you use the time to continue bowing to the Buddha. If you sustain this for two or three days—and practice this way at every session—then when conditions are ripe, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will naturally send you a sign, foretelling the year and month of your rebirth in the Land of Ultimate Bliss.

From this, we can see that seeking rebirth in the Western Pure Land requires immense diligence. Even when you can recite without false thoughts, you must continue to practice so that your grade of rebirth keeps rising. Living beings suffer terribly; if we do not resolve to save them, their suffering will only increase. Therefore, we must be serious about our practice—diligent, and then more diligent still!

We should avoid creating evil karma and refrain from casually criticizing others. When karmic obstacles lessen, the mind settles, and meditation becomes smoother. If you can recite the Buddha's name with no false thoughts, then when you sit, you can sit for one incense period after another, from morning until noon. When the mind is free of unwholesome thoughts, sitting becomes naturally easy, and your practice becomes steady and stable.

Therefore, reciting the Buddha's name twenty-four hours a day and sitting in meditation are essentially the same in nature—both lead to a state of purity. I used to think that only reciting "Amitabha Buddha" brought a pure mind. But in fact, reciting "Medicine Master Buddha" during the morning ceremony is also a pure mind, and reciting the *Avatamsaka Sutra* during the day is also a pure mind. Is there any difference? No. "One is many, and many are one."

Cultivation is meant to counteract our attachments, discriminations, and ignorance. However, before our skill is fully mature, we should focus on a single Dharma door and cultivate it deeply over a long period, rather than trying to learn too many things at once. With too many methods, it is easy to lose one's way. That is all I will share today. Amitufo! ❀