Verse on the Seventy-Second line
“NWO LA JIN CHR PAN CHYE LA YE”
of the Great Compassion Mantra
Composed by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua:

His body unhindered, the small appears within the great.  
His scope pervades north, south, east, and west.  
The three-thousand system of worlds are but a single thought.  
In no way are you and I and others separate.
The Sutra in Forty-two Sections
Spoken by the Buddha
A Simple Explanation by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

Section 17
The Arrival of Light
Dispels Darkness

A Shramana asked the Buddha, “What is the greatest strength? What is the utmost brilliance?”

The Buddha said, “One who sees the Way is like someone holding a torch who enters a dark room, dispelling the darkness so that only light remains. When you study the Way and see the truth, ignorance vanishes and light remains forever.”

The seventeenth section reveals that ignorance does not have an independent existence. Since it has no independent existence, once it vanishes it is gone forever. Once you see the Way, then all ignorance will disappear.

The Buddha said, “One who sees the Way is like someone holding a torch who enters a dark room, dispelling the darkness so that only light remains.” A person who sees the Way is like someone who takes up a torch and goes into a dark room, immediately banishing the darkness so that only the light remains. The darkness is gone because he holds a torch. The torch represents our wisdom. This means that if we have wisdom, we can break through ignorance, which is represented by the dark room. If we have wisdom, the dark room will become bright.
When you study the Way and see the truth, ignorance vanishes and light remains forever. Someone who studies the Way and can see the actual truth will immediately vanquish ignorance, and wisdom will remain forever.

Section 18

Thoughts and Language Are Basically Empty

The Buddha said, “My Dharma is the mindfulness that is both mindfulness and non-mindfulness. It is the practice that is both practice and non-practice. It is composed of words that are words and non-words, and cultivation that is cultivation and non-cultivation. Those who understand are near to it; those who are confused are far away, indeed. It cannot be reached following the path of language. It is not hindered by physical objects. If you are off by a hair’s breadth, you will lose it in an instant.”

The eighteenth section explains the relationship between the existence and non-existence of mindfulness and cultivation.

The Buddha said, “My Dharma is the mindfulness that is both mindfulness and non-mindfulness.” The Buddha said that his Dharma is not being mindful that you are mindful; and even the thought of that ‘not being mindful’ is not there. Therefore, this Dharma is called a mindfulness that is mindfulness, and yet not mindfulness. It is the practice that is both practice and non-practice. In this Dharma, practice also is “the Way of effortlessness.” In cultivating, you don't want to have any attachments. It should be the same as not cultivating. Even the shadow of “no cultivating” should not remain.

It is composed of words that are words and non-words. Don't be attached to words and language. Further, even your intention not to be attached to words and language should be done away with. Also, it is cultivation that is cultivation and non-cultivation. It is the Way of effortlessness, cultivating and yet not cultivating, certifying and,
yet not certifying. There isn't any thought of cultivating the Way. That means that you don't have any attachments; all attachments are seen as empty. Even the emptiness is emptied out.

**Those who understand are near to it.** To understand something means to be clear about it. If you understand this doctrine, you are near to the Way. **Those who are confused are far away, indeed.** But if you fail to understand it and are confused about its principles, then you will be far from the Way. What is the Way ultimately like? I’ll tell you: **It cannot be reached following the path of language.** You would like to speak about it, but you cannot represent it in words. You want to think about it, but you can't formulate the thought. You simply cannot speak of its wonder. It is said that the path of words and language is cut off, and the place of the mind’s workings ceases to be. What the mind wants to think about is gone, and absolutely everything is empty. **It is not hindered by physical objects.** Physical matter is itself the basic substance of True Suchness. If you are able to realize this state, then you will see that the mountains, the rivers, the earth, and all the myriad things are just the basic substance of True Suchness, and you will not be hindered by physical objects. **If you are off by a hair’s breadth,** if you are off by just a fraction of an inch, just a tiny bit, in the way you cultivate, you will lose it in an instant. You will immediately lose it and won’t be able to find it. You should break through your attachments, and then you will be able to attain this state.

(To be continued … )
During the Sung Dynasty, Huei Guan (Wisdom of Contemplation), a disciple of Buddhhabhadra, lived in Nanking, China. He had heard about the inconceivable spiritual penetrations and wonderful deeds of Dharma Master Gunavarman, about how he was spreading the Buddhadharma in India and how everyone believed in him, made offerings to him and revered him. He said: “We must invite this Dharma Master to our country to propagate the Dharma.” He related his idea to Emperor Wen who sent an officer from Jiao Jr (present-day Vietnam) to invite Master Gunavarman to China. In addition, Dharma Master Huei Guan also sent Dharma Masters Fa Chang and Dao Chung to go along to help invite the Master. But before they arrived, the Master had already decided to travel to another small country to spread the Buddhadharma. What happened then? Very strangely indeed, the Master’s ship was blown to Guang Province in China by a strong wind. Therefore, the Sung Court had to send other envoys to welcome him.

Dharma Master Huei Guan also sent Shramanas Fa Chang and Dao Chung and
many others to the vicinity of India (in fact, Java) to invite Dharma Master Gunavarman to China. Originally, the King of Java did not want his teacher, Master Gunavarman, to leave the country. Then he thought it over and realized that people should not be selfish. His country was a small country. India is a big country, and so is China. He should let his teacher go to a great country such as China to teach and transform living beings. Nevertheless, before the Chinese Shramanas reached Java, Dharma Master Gunavarman had boarded a ship, prepared to travel to another small country to spread the Dharma. What happened then? Master Gunavarman’s ship encountered a great wind which blew him to Guangdong in China.

After the Master arrived in Guangdong, he continued in his travels to a district called Shi Hsing. In this district there was a mountain. The Master saw that the mountain resembled Mount Grdhrakuta (“Vulture Peak”) in India and so he renamed it Mount Grdhrakuta. On the mountain were many tigers. When people tried to travel to that mountain, the tigers would eat them. The Master built a monastery on the mountain, and many left-home people came to live in it. The place where the Master lived was about a mile from the monastery. When the small bell was hit in the monastery, the sound could not be heard where the Master lived. However, every time the bell was hit, whether it was during the meal offering, or other Dharma assemblies, the Master would arrive at the Monastery. How was it that people recognized the Master as a sage who had certified to the First Fruition? The way he walked was different from ordinary people. Whenever he walked, his feet were one inch off the ground. He did not walk on the ground. Instead, he walked in space. Other people might see him as if he were walking on the ground, but in fact, he walked in space. For this reason, during rainy days, the bottom of his shoes never got muddy,
and therefore, most people recognized him as a sage.

Sometimes, when the Master was walking on the road, he would encounter a tiger. In this case, the Master would place his staff on the tiger’s head and speak Dharma to him. When he was finished, the tiger would simply walk away. After this happened several times, when people came to the mountain and encountered tigers, the tigers did not harm them any more.

The Master lived in the mountain for approximately one or two years. Afterward, Emperor Wen of the Sung Dynasty insisted on inviting him to live in Nanking. The Master consented, and the Emperor said to him: “I am an Emperor now, but I too want to become a vegetarian. Nevertheless, in my position it is almost impossible. It is a very complicated situation that prevents me from becoming a vegetarian. What can be done?” The Master said to Emperor Wen of Sung: “The cultivation of an Emperor is different from that of his citizens. The citizens have to take the Five Precepts, they have to eat vegetarian food and refrain from eating meat. They have no awesome virtue so they can’t really do anything good. But you are an Emperor, you need not necessarily eat vegetarian food. All you need to do is to engage in all good deeds so all your people can benefit from them. This is your cultivation.” The Dharma Master Gunavarman (Armor of Merit and Virtue) spoke again: “For example, if you can be just and benevolent, and you have good strategies and rule fairly so your citizens can engage in less killing, then you will have saved many living being’s lives. It is not counted as merit and virtue if you eat your meals refraining from eating the flesh of a single living being. If you can cause your citizens to refrain from killing, then imperceptibly, it is just as if you’re eating vegetarian food. If you can cause your citizens to be filial to their parents, and cause them to correct their faults and do all good, then it is just the same as if you’re cultivating
也就是你自己修行。所以你不必说你少吃一点肉或者少喝一点酒，这就是修行，你做皇帝，只要能令老百姓都诸恶不作，众善奉行，这就是你自己修行了。」

宋文帝听功德鵕法师说完之后，说：「一般的沙门都迷缘，一般的儒者都迷境。迷缘呢，就是讲因果循环，报应不爽。迷境呢，就执著这篇文章，或者这本典籍，就是一切经书之类的。今天我和法师这一谈论，真是可以了然人天的大道。」于是，就给这住法师造了一座祇洹寺，造成了之后，就有很多修道的比丘，比丘尼，优婆塞，优婆夷在這修行。

(下期待續)

(上承自第10页)

因此，当我们要吃这东西的时候，要想地狱饿鬼没有东西吃的这种痛苦，那么这些饿鬼都是谁去做的呢？或者我們自己的六親眷屬，無量劫以前的父母，轉餓鬼道都不一定，所以大家要拿出十分分的誠心來做這個佛事。不要贪吃，吃的愈好对健康是不太好的，尤其吃肉的人，你吃人家肉，将来人家吃你的肉，互相吞食，這是沒有完的时侯。我們真正佛的弟子，不要有貪吃這種的思想，這就是救自己的倒懸，也救眾生的倒懸，也救餓鬼的倒懸，所以我們用盆子裡這些乾乾淨淨的菜，來供養十方三寶，幫助過去、未来的眾生來做這個法會。

Therefore, when we eat this food, we should contemplate the suffering of the hungry ghosts in the hells who have no food to eat. Who are the hungry ghosts? Perhaps they are our six kinds of close relatives or parents from the limitless past who have been reborn into the realm of hungry ghosts. This is not fixed. Therefore, everyone must have a thousand-fold mind of sincerity to do this work of the Buddhas. Don't be gluttonous. If you eat a lot of delicious food, it is not good for your health. This is especially true for people who eat meat. If you eat the flesh of others, in the future, they will eat your flesh. There is no end to this mutual devouring. Therefore, in being a true disciple of the Buddha, you should not have this mind of being greedy for good things to eat. This is not only to save ourselves from “hanging upside down,” it is also saving living beings from hanging upside down, and saving hungry ghosts from hanging upside down. Therefore, this basin is used to hold vegetables while they are washed very clean to make an offering to the Triple Jewel, and to perform this Dharma Assembly to help the living beings of the past and the future.
Today, all the faithful from the ten directions have come here to celebrate the Ullambana Dharma Assembly. What is the meaning of Ullambana? Ullambana is a Sanskrit word, translated into Chinese, it means “upside down,” indicating a person hanging upside down with feet upwards and head downwards. The person is hanging there suspended in space; above there is no heaven and below there is no earth. Their suffering is endless and limitless. People are like that. But the word is not referring to people, it is referring to ghosts in the hells who have to endure a kind of suffering which is like a person who is hanging upside down.

Mahamaudgalyayana had attained the six spiritual penetrations. The six spiritual penetrations are the penetration of the heavenly eye, the penetration of the heavenly ear, the penetration of others' thoughts, the penetration of others' past lives, the penetration of non-outflows, and the penetration of complete spirit. Actually, “spiritual penetration” is just a term. To clarify further, a spiritual penetration is a type of wisdom. Once your wisdom is complete, there is nothing that you do not know, there is nothing that is not clear. Knowledge is a kind of understanding and clarity is a state of constant brightness. When Mahamaudgalyayana obtained the state of the six spiritual penetrations, he contemplated to find out where his mother was. By means of his contemplation, he knew that when his mother was alive, she liked to eat meat and fish eggs. What she liked to eat the most was caviar. In one meal, it was not known how many living beings she consumed. Therefore, after she passed away, she fell into the hells, and became a hungry ghost.
雖然目連尊者本身證有六通，可以給他母親送飲食，他母親接過這飲食就用袖子把這個食器蓋著，為什麼呢？怕旁人看見。怕其他的餓鬼來和她搶，就用手抓這個飲食往嘴裡送，可是一到嘴裡，居然這美味飲食化為火炭，燒的這個餓鬼也不能吃東西了。目連尊者就去問佛這是什麼道理？佛就解釋說，他母親在生的時候不信三寶，不單不信，而且還毀謗三寶佛法僧，所以死了墮地獄，轉餓鬼，猶如這個人倒掛起來這麼痛苦。可是他被掛起來不是旁人掛的，他自己把自己掛起來，自己把自己擲到受苦的地狱去。

佛說：「救你母親，非是一人的力量能救得了，必須要藉著十方的僧眾，要在這一天來供僧，那裡你母親就能解除痛苦，其他的餓鬼也都能離苦得樂。」因為這種原因，就留下這個「盂蘭節」，也叫做「盂蘭盆」。這個「盆」字，是中國話，也就是裝飲食的一種器皿。僧眾也在這個時候，就藉著佛光，吃這種很美味的飲食。可是我們吃這種飲食要感恩地獄苦，發菩提心，什麼叫發菩提心？發菩提心就是諸惡不作，眾善奉行；要嚴持戒律，依教修行，這就能令餓鬼都離苦得樂了。

(下轉至第8頁)

Even though Mahamaugalyayana himself had already obtained the six penetrations, when he brought food to his mother, after receiving the food, she used her sleeve to cover up the plate. Why is this? She was afraid others would see it. She was afraid other ghosts would take it from her. She used her hand to put the food into her mouth, but once it entered her mouth, the delicious food turned into burning coals, it burned so that the hungry ghost could not eat the food. Mahamaudgalyayana went to ask the Buddha the reason for this. The Buddha explained that when his mother was alive, she did not believe in the Triple Jewel, and not only did she not believe, she also slandered the Triple Jewel. Therefore, when she passed away, she fell into the hells and became a hungry ghost. The suffering there is as if someone were hanging upside-down. However, no one hung her there, it is all her own doing. She hung herself there, she put herself in the hells to undergo the suffering.

Therefore, the Buddha said, “Your strength alone cannot save your mother. You need to rely on the Sangha of the ten directions. If on this day, you can make offerings to the Sangha, then your mother can be liberated from suffering. In addition, all other hungry ghosts can also be apart from suffering and attain bliss.” For this reason, there is the Ullambana Dharma Assembly. It is also called the Ullambana Basin. The word "pan," meaning basin, is a Chinese word, it means a container for holding food. At this time, relying on the Buddha's light, the Sangha can taste all kinds of delicious flavors. When we eat, we should think of the suffering in the hells, and bring forth the Bodhi Mind. What is “bringing forth the Bodhi Mind?” Bringing forth the Bodhi Mind is not to do any evil, to cultivate all good, to strictly uphold the precepts, and cultivate according to the teachings. In this way, we can cause the hungry ghosts to leave suffering and attain bliss.

(Continuing on page 8)
Chapter 3:

“The Six Word Great Bright Dharani is the wonderful inherent mind of Bodhisattva Contemplate-at-ease. If there is anyone who knows this wonderful inherent mind, he thus knows liberation.”

“If there is anyone who is able to constantly receive and uphold this Six Word Great Bright Mantra, at the time of recitation, countless Tathagathas numberless as the grains of sands in the Ganges, and Bodhisattvas as numerous as dustmotes will gather together and bestow protection upon such an individual.”

“Ancestors of seven generations will attain liberation…all organisms inside one’s body will attain to the position of non-retreating Bodhisattvas.”

“If a person can be mindful of the Six Word Great Bright Mantra in accordance with the Dharma, such an individual will obtain inexhaustible eloquence, accumulation of clean and pure wisdom, great kindness and compassion; daily perfection of the merit and virtue of the Six Paramitas and the anointing of his crown by the Great Wheel Turning King. Whoever comes in contact with the breath of such an individual will give rise to kindness and stay away from the various poisons of hatred, will attain the position of a non-retreating Bodhisattva and quickly attain annutara-samyaksambodhi. Whoever is touched by the hand of such an individual will quickly attain to the position of a Bodhisattva.”

“Such an individual who upholds this Six Word Great Mantra will never undergo the suffering of birth, old age, sickness and death, as well as the pain of being separated from loved ones. Instead, such an individual will receive inconceivable responses from his recitation.”
Chapter 4:

Atop the Lotus Flower Thus Come One said, “I can count the number of dust motes, but I cannot reckon the merit and virtue that results from one single recitation of the Six Word Great Bright Mantra.”

“If a person writes the Six Word Great Bright Mantra out by hand, it is equivalent to writing eighty-four thousand dharma treasures, without any difference.”

Lecture by Venerable Master Hsuan Hua:

OM. When you recite this first syllable, all ghost spirits will certainly put their palms together. Why do they put their palms together? They have to follow the rules and regulations. Following rules and regulations, they are on the right path. When this first syllable is recited, no ghost spirits dare rebel or cause trouble. They dare not obey.

MA NI. In Sanskrit, this means quiescent wisdom. A person who uses wisdom will understand all principles. This way he can quietly extinguish, and have no birth. Another meaning of this is leaving defilement, leaving the filth of dust. It is like the As-you-wish-jeweled-pearl, so clean and pure and devoid of filth. As long as you have the As-you-wish-jeweled-pearl, you will be able to obtain what you wish for, every single vow you make will be realized. This is the advantage it has.

PAD MI. Translated from Sanskrit, this means brightness universally shining. Simultaneously, it also means the opening of the lotus. This is an analogy of the perfection of the lotus – without impediments. This is the wonderful mind of Bodhisattva Contemplate-at-ease.

HUNG. In Sanskrit, this means bringing forth. Everything comes to existence from hung. It also carries the meaning of protecting and upholding. When you recite this syllable,
all good dharma-protecting spirits will come to support and protect you. Another indication of this syllable is that difficulties of any sort will be eradicated. It also implies accomplishment, meaning you will attain success in whatever dharma door you choose to cultivate.

When you recite this Six Word Great Bright Mantra, innumerable Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Vajra Protectors will always protect you and support you. When Bodhisattva Contemplate-at-ease finished reciting this Six Word Great Bright Mantra, seven million Buddhas came to surround him and protect him. The power of the Six Word Great Bright Mantra is inconceivable. Its efficacy is unfathomable. This is why it is called the esoteric sect. If anybody can fully and thoroughly explain it, the meaning it encompasses is immeasurable. There is no way to completely speak out its entirety. I hereby only give a general explanation of each syllable.

Now, I will tell you a little bit about the unspeakable power of the esoteric sect. Why is it unspeakable? It is because what I have said constitutes not even one fraction of tens of thousands of its entirety. Why is this so? If you can recite and uphold this Six Word Great Bright Mantra non-stop, brightness will take the place of darkness in the entire Six Paths. To attain a kind of samadhi, you should first be single-minded. This way, not only will the Six Paths shine forth brightness, but the entire Ten Dharma Realms will become a treasury of brightness. Now that you all know the power of this Six Word Great Bright Mantra, I hope you can set aside whatever activities you are doing and come recite this Six Word Great Bright Mantra.
Firm as a Rock

During the Ming Dynasty, there was a young man named Mao Lu-Men, who was away from his hometown in pursuit of study and took lodging with Mr. Chian, a country gentleman. Mr. Chian hired a very attractive servant girl who admired Mao (in Chinese, the family name “Mao” is pronounced the same as the word for “cat”) for his handsome looks. One night, this servant girl went to Mao’s room, looking for a kitten. Mao asked her, “Why do you come here all alone, looking for a kitten?” The servant girl smiled, and she said, “I am not calling for a kitten (lit. “small cat”). I like a big cat.” Having heard what she said, Mao, with a stern countenance, said, “My father sent me to this place, away from home, to study. If I do anything incorrect, how can I face him in the future? How can I face your master?” The servant girl was ashamed and withdrew.

Later on, Mao passed the civil examinations in the year of Wu-Shi of Jia-Jing. He received the official position of adjutant and lived to be ninety years old.

Mao was unmoved when faced with a beautiful woman. His mind was firm as a rock. The reward: afterward, he possessed blessings, prosperity and longevity.
金輪寺中文學校
Gold Wheel Monastery Chinese School

學期：8月31日～12月7日
時間：每週六早上 9:00 ～ 下午 2:30
年齡：5 歲～15 歲（5 歲以下之兒童，酌情安排）
內容：三皈依、佛學、打坐、中文、上供、運動、
音樂、美勞、背經、
倫理道德、故事、驗收成果。
學費：100 元 註冊費 教材費：20 元

Schedule: August 31, 2002 to December 7, 2002
Time: Every Saturday from 9am to 2:30pm
Age Limit: 5 to 15 years old (All those below 5 years of age need special arrangement.)
Curriculum: Three Refuges, Buddhism, Meditation, Chinese language,
Meal Offering, Exercise, Music, Arts and
Crafts, Sutra/Mantra Recitation, Morality and Ethics,
Storytime, Affirmation of Achievements
Tuition Fee: $100 Registration Fee/ $20 Educational Materials

235 North Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90042 (323)258-6668
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*Schedule of Events – August of 2002*

© 禱拜大悲懺 Great Compassion Repentance 1:00 pm

Fall Semester for Gold Wheel Monastery Chinese School begins on Aug. 31. Registration is on-going. Please call Gold Wheel Monastery for details.

~常得有日無日，莫虛無時想有時~