Cultivating the Bodhi Path

Composed by Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

Demons Test the True Way

Demons tested the True Way; only the True Way encounters demons.

Becoming brighter with each test, the more it needs to be tested.

Polished akin to an autumn moon,

In the sky, shining its light upon the hordes of demons.

When the horde of demons are transformed,

The inherent Buddha in the self-nature will manifest.

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He commanded Manjushri to take the mantra and go provide protection. When the evil mantra was extinguished, he was to lend support and encourage Ananda and Matangi's daughter to return to where the Buddha was.

**He commanded Manjushri:** “Command” means to give orders. To whom was the command given? This situation requires a person with great wisdom to be able to rescue a stupid one. Although Ananda was certified with the first fruition of Arhatship, his samadhi-power was not enough. For this reason, Matangi’s magical spell mesmerized him. He was in the most dangerous situation! With her licentious body, Matangi’s daughter stroked and rubbed him until he was on the verge of destroying the precept-substance. ‘On the verge’ means that he hadn’t yet violated the precepts or ruined the precept substance. This is an important point. If the sutra text said that Ananda had ruined his precept-substance, then it is all over for him; he had fallen, and in the future he would have great difficulty to successfully cultivate the Way. Fortunately, while he was ‘on the verge’ of ruining his precept-substance, the Buddha immediately knew it.

During the vegetarian offering, I believe the Buddha did not eat his fill. Why? His beloved disciple, who was also his cousin and his attendant, was in trouble. Why an “attendant”? When the Buddha lectured on the sutras and spoke the dharma, Ananda was always alongside the Buddha to serve and attend to his needs. It is like Wen Tz Wang and Jin Shan Li, they are attendants, also called “Dharma Protectors”. At that time, the Buddha thought, “Ah, my attendant is waylaid by demons. How can that be?” So, the Buddha only ate about eighty percent
full and quickly returned to his sublime abode of the Jeta Grove. The king’s royal families, officials, elderly and laypeople all followed him. Oh! Their numbers are incalculable!

Arriving at the Jeta Grove, Shakya-muni Buddha manifested an auspicious phenomenon. He emitted a hundred-jeweled rays of bright light. Within the brightness emerged jeweled lotuses of a thousand-petals. Within each jeweled lotus, a transformation-body Buddha sat in full lotus, proclaiming the Shurangama Mantra. However, Ananda was very faraway. The Buddha needed a sangha to take the mantra and go save Ananda. So Shakyamuni Buddha issued the command to Manjushri Bodhisattva, who had great wisdom to take the mantra and go provide protection. He was to go to Matangi’s house of prostitution to save and protect Ananda. Within the Shurangama Mantra are several phrases that are specifically directed at breaking up externalist dharmas; in this its efficacy is unsurpassed. Hence, Manjushri Bodhisattva used this mantra to save and protect Ananda.

Editor’s Note: The following is an excerpt from the “Driving Force of Subjective Wisdom” seminar on November 28, 1987.

The Shurangama Mantra was spoken by the transformation body of the Buddha. One must have great wisdom, great virtuous conduct, and great vow power of kindness and compassion to be able to use this Shurangama Mantra. Manjushri Bodhisattva is foremost in wisdom. He has lofty way-virtue and has perfected the Four Limitless Minds, i.e. kindness, compassion, joy, giving. Hence, the Buddha commanded him to use the Shurangama Mantra to save and protect Ananda. The former Brahma Heaven mantra is a mantra that can mesmerize people. The Shurangama Mantra is a mantra that will lead people to enlightenment. It made Ananda awaken from being spellbound and restore his samadhi power. Hence, the evil spell was extinguished and
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Ananda had ‘come to’. Manjushri Bodhisattva lend support in bringing Ananda and Matangi’s daughter to where the Buddha was.

From this section of the sutra, we should know that to uphold the Shurangama Mantra requires strict adherence to precepts and regulations. We must cultivate Prajna wisdom in order to bring about a response with this mantra, and be able to use it as-you-wish auspiciously.

— “Driving Force of Subjective Wisdom” seminar ends

As soon as Manjushri Bodhisattva recited the Shurangama Mantra when he arrived at Matangi’s house, the evil mantra was extinguished. The “mantra purported to have come from the former Brahma Heaven” was no longer effective. Ananda awakened. Then, Manjushri Bodhisattva lent support and encouragement in bringing Ananda and Matangi’s daughter to where the Buddha was.

What does “lend support,” mean? Ananda was held spellbound by the evil mantra and had now just “come to,” so he was still disoriented and had no idea where he was. It was like awakening from a dream. Therefore, Manjushri Bodhisattva lent him support, holding his arm to keep Ananda steady.

“Why encourage Matangi’s daughter?” you ask. She was so distraught at losing the love of her life. Had Manjushri Bodhisattva not placated her, she would stop at nothing to keep Ananda, even risking her own life and endangering Manjushri Bodhisattva as well. Had he not reassured her at that point, she would have been beside herself. Who knows what she might have done out of her jealousy? Manjushri Bodhisattva assuaged her, saying, “You are a very beautiful girl. You are also a good woman. Let us go talk things over with the Buddha and see if you
can have your wishes granted. I will put in a good word for you. It may all work out.” He chose his words carefully, expeditiously, being discreet and tactful so as not to arouse her anger or cause her to harm or kill herself.

From the very beginning line “Thus I have heard” to this point in the text, is the “preface”. Preface comes before the sutra text proper; it is to describe and substantiate the evidence. From the Six Fulfillments that begins with “Thus I have heard” to “return to where the Buddha was”, this passage of the text is the preface. This entire preface is likewise the “postscript”, even though it’s at the beginning of the sutra. “Isn’t that a contradiction?” one may ask. “How can it be both a preface and a postscript?” When the Buddha first spoke this sutra, this initial section was not present. Ananda added this section at the time of sutra compilation. Since it was an add-on after the sutra was spoken, it is called the “postscript”.

The preface section includes the ‘authentication of faith’ and ‘foreword’. The section that fulfills the Six Fulfillments confirms that the sutra is genuine and trustworthy. It is also called ‘general preface’ since all other sutras have similar prefaces. The section from the Six Fulfillments to “return to where the Buddha was” constitutes the ‘foreword’; it explains the causal conditions between Ananda and Matangi’s daughter that led to the speaking of this sutra. For this reason, it is also called the ‘specific preface’ because it specifically pertains to this sutra.

People who study the Buddhadharma should know that although ‘preface’ is just a nomenclature and is irrelevant whether it is explained or not, you still have to understand its principle. If you don’t understand the principle and cannot distinguish the preface, then you do not understand Buddhadharma.
Those who understand Buddhadharma are able to comprehend the various sections of the sutra text. They are able to enter deeply into the Sutra Treasury. Boring deep into the treasury, they attain wisdom like the sea. If you think like this, “It is I who spoke this sutra. Its principles emanated from my heart.”, then you are one in unity with the sutra. At that instant, there is nothing deep nor shallow. You will no longer feel that the study of sutras is difficult, but will take its own course. The text of the Shurangama Sutra is written extremely well. Of all the Chinese classics, such as Interpretation of the Ancient Prose, Gems from Chinese Culture, The Four Books and The Five Classics, none is a finer piece of literature. I regard the Shurangama Sutra as the ultimate in literary exquisiteness, wonderful to the extreme. People who wish to study Chinese should not miss the opportunity to study in depth the Shurangama Sutra text. Anyone who does so will have a thorough foundation in the Chinese language and will be able to understand all of Chinese literature.

In Hong Kong, I have a disciple who can memorize this sutra from beginning to end without missing a word. Why did I ask him to read it? Originally, I intended to read it myself until I could memorize it. That includes the Shurangama Sutra and the Dharma Flower Sutra. I wanted to recite them to the point that I would never forget them. Nevertheless, my time is very limited and my wish is never fulfilled. However, my disciple can recite from memory both the Dharma Flower Sutra and the Shurangama Sutra. It took him not just one or two years, but five years of effort to memorize both sutras.

(To be continued ...)
When the followers heard this verse, they understood its meaning and bowed down before the Master. They made up their minds to practice in accordance with the Dharma and to not argue, knowing that the Great Master would not remain long in the world. Senior-Seated Fa Hai bowed again and asked, “After the High Master enters extinction, who will inherit the robe and Dharma?”

When the followers of Sixth Patriarch heard this verse, they understood the Master’s teaching. All sincerely bowed in obeisance to the Master. Nobody cried or made a fuss. Nobody argued. They made up their minds to practice in accordance with the Dharma and to not argue. Everyone is aware that the Great Master would only be in the world for about a month. Fa Hai never forgets himself. The Senior-Seated Fa Hai bowed again and asked, “After the High Master enters stillness, who will inherit the robe and Dharma?” No doubt he wanted the robe and bowl for himself.

The Master said, “Ever since I spoke the Dharma in Da Fan Temple, transcriptions of my lectures have been circulated around. They are to be called The Dharma Jewel Platform Sutra. Protect and pass on these teachings in order to rescue living beings. When you speak of these teachings, you are speaking the Orthodox Dharma. Now, I will speak the Dharma for you, but I will not transmit the robe. The roots of your faith are genuine and mature. You certainly have no doubts and you are capable of carrying on the great Work. According to the transmission verse spoken by the First Patriarch Bodhidharma, there is no need to transmit the robe anymore. His verse said,

*Originally I came to this land,*
*To rescue deluded sentient beings.*
*One flower opens up five petals, and*
*The fruit comes to bear of itself.*

*(Continued from issue #261)*
第六祖大師說：「我在韶關大梵寺說法，一直到現在所抄錄流通。」當時沒有錄音機，所以都用筆寫筆記。此部經叫做《法寶塔經》，你們要守護此法寶，要辗转流通互相抄錄傳授，來廣度一切的眾生。你若依照這個方法去修行，這就是正法，你們現都明白我所給你們說的法，所以不須傳此衣了。因為衣是表信的，而你們這些人都是信根淳熟，對我決定沒有懷疑，所以都能擔當如來的家業來教化眾生。可是話又說回來，根據先祖師菩提達摩大師，他傳授偈頌的意思，說這衣從我開創就不該傳了。達摩祖師的偈頌說：「我本來到中國，是為傳佛的正法，而救度一切眾生的迷惑。我這一衣將來會開五葉——即二祖，三祖、四祖、五祖、六祖，五位祖師，到時候就不須傳此衣，只要傳法即可。」故五祖對六祖也說：「衣為爭端，止汝勿傳。」你們看「結果自然成」，這結果的「果」就是你們這一些人，要自然成了。六祖大師亦說：「菩提果自成」，你們的菩提果要快點成，最要紧的就是不要懶惰，你看菩提達摩祖師早就知道你們有這麼多的果，將來都會自然成。那個果，也就是這個果，這個果，也就是那個果，沒有兩樣的。

師復曰：善知識，汝等各各淨心聴吾說法。若欲成就種智，須達一相三昧。一相三昧，於一切處而不住相。於彼相中不生憎愛，亦無取捨。不念利益成壞等事。安閒恬靜虛融澹泊，此名一相三昧。於一切處行住坐臥，純一心不動道場。真成淨土。此名一行三昧。若人具二三昧，如地有種含藏長養成熟，其實相。一相一行亦復如是。

The Master reiterated, “All of you Good Knowing Advisors, purify your minds and listen to my explanation of the Dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you must attain the Samadhi of One Mark and the Samadhi of One Conduct. If you do not dwell in marks wherever you are, neither giving rise to love nor hate, neither grasping nor rejecting, neither apprehending advantage nor disadvantage, success nor failure, but instead you remain tranquil, calm, and accommodating, then you have achieved the Samadhi of One Mark. If you uphold the four deportments (walking, standing, sitting, reclining) wherever you are, maintaining an unmoving Bodhimanda of a straight mind and truly realizing the Pure Land, then you have achieved the
Samadhi of One Conduct. A person who is replete with these two kinds of samadhi can be likened to earth that has seeds planted and to be nourished in the ground, able to grow, mature and bear fruit. The One Mark and One Conduct are just like that.”

The Master said, “All Good Knowing Advisors, purify your minds. Do not harbor any greed, hate, and delusion. Listen to my expounding the dharma. If you wish to realize all knowledge, you have to understand thoroughly the Samadhi of One Mark (not dwelling in marks while amidst marks) and the Samadhi of One Conduct (not dwelling in conduct while amidst myriad conduct). Samadhi of One Mark. Whether you are in a good place or a bad place, whether in motion or in stillness, do not dwell in marks. When you encounter situations in the midst of external marks, do not give rise to like or dislike. As stated: Not stirring up love or hate, the mind is thus, thus unmoving. Faced with situations that you like, do not think of procuring the object of your desire. When you like/love something, you want to have it, as stated in the Twelve Causal Links, “love conditions grasping, grasping conditions becoming...” You grasp at objects of love to have them for your own. You let go of objects you detest, casting them away. Do not apprehend advantages/disadvantages as well as success/failure. If you think “What’s in it for me?”, you are just being greedy, self-seeking, and impure. Do not fuss over success/failure. Do not harbor such thoughts.

Stay tranquil and free of vexations; be calm like water without waves. Be free of afflictions caused by love-and-hate, grasping-and-rejecting, gain-and-loss, and success-and-failure. If you were not obsessed with success, you would not know what failure is. Be accommodating like empty space. The myriad things come into being from empty space; yet, empty space does not make a big deal of it, staying nonchalant of it all. Empty space did not set up an office, directing the occurrence of events (e.g. “You be born here! You go die there!”). All the myriad things’ coming into being, undergoing transformations and going into extinction, follows the natural phenomena, without much ado. Empty space is accommodating; it is tranquil and serene with clarity of purpose. As stated: When in the status of nobility, one should conduct oneself as a noble. When in the lowly status of poverty, one should do what a poor person ought to do. When situated among barbarous tribes, one should do what is proper to do in barbarous tribes. When in situations of disasters, one should do as needed in disasters. Simply go with the flow. Do not have greed, hatred, or delusion. With fewer desires, one knows contentment without dependence on certain conditions. Do not think, “Wait until my book gets
published. Then, I will be a famous scholar.” Nor should you think of doing something eccentric to get the attention of the whole world and become famous. Do not have such ideas. As stated:

Knowing contentment, you are always happy.
Able to be patient, you’re at peace.

By being accommodating and serene, you can be apart from marks amidst marks, and be apart from defilements while in the midst of defilements. That is the Samadhi of One Mark.

Samadhi of One Conduct. It is conducting oneself with a straight mind wherever you are, be it a good place or a bad place, wholesome or unwholesome, right or wrong; upholding the four deportments of walking, standing, sitting or reclining with a straight mind. A straight mind is the Bodhimanda. Students of the Buddhadharma should not use a crooked mind. Be forthright with everyone in your thoughts, words, and actions. Do not have a devious mind. Honestly speak your mind; do not say ‘west’ when you are thinking of ‘east’. What you say should match what you think. Be forthright in what you say and what you do. A straight mind is the Bodhimanda. When you plant a devious cause, you will reap a devious effect/consequence. Hence, you should only maintain one straight mind in the four deportments of walking, standing, sitting or reclining. Maintain the one to the utmost; there is only one and no second one. That one is the straight mind. Cultivators of the Way should be forthright when dealing with others, self or matters. Do not be scheming, such as approaching wealthy people to borrow money from them. No matter how poor you are, do not do anything that is devoid of integrity and shame. If you later on return the money you borrowed, then you have not lost your noble nature. However, if you do not return the money you borrowed, then you are truly sordid. Having a steadfast Bodhimanda means that you have a straightforward mind. When you can be forthright in your speech and actions in your unmoving Bodhimanda, then you have truly realized the Pure Land. This is called Samadhi of One Conduct.

If a person is replete with Samadhi of One Mark and Samadhi of One Conduct, and he abides by these principles in cultivating the Way, he is like the earth that has seeds planted, buried in the underground. With the passing of time, the seeds will grow Bodhi sprouts and mature to fruits of Bodhi. The Samadhi of One Mark and Samadhi of One Conduct are just like that.

(To be continued ...)

(下期待續)
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Constantly waiting for the flavor of Chan makes you forget all about applying effort.

When you sit in Chan meditation, do not be greedy for the flavor of Chan. What is the flavor of Chan? It refers to the bliss of Dhyana. When you have sat long enough, you start experiencing a feeling of comfort and ease, and you may feel somewhat indolent. If you become greedy from this state of comfort and ease, it will be difficult for you to make progress. You will linger there, always trying to get back to the state of flavorful Chan. When the state goes away, you will chase after it, thinking, "When am I going to be in that type of state again? That state is devoid of the marks of a self, others, living beings, and life span; it is free of afflictions. It is a state of bliss and ease. I wonder when will I ever have that experience again." Then, you will keep on waiting for that wonderful experience to reoccur. You will be so focused on waiting, you will unnoticeably forget all about applying effort in your Chan meditation. That is what being attached to the flavor of Chan means. Cultivators of Chan meditation should be free of obstructions and hang-ups. They must be free of craving and seeking. They must be neither delighted nor depressed. They must have neither apprehension nor anxiety. They must regard their body the same way as empty space and the Dharma Realm. There should be no clinging to anything or craving for anything. The moment there is craving, you fall into a secondary level of truth. Below is a brief explanation of the states of the Four Dhyana Heaven.

First Dhyana Heavens (Ground of Joy Arising from Separation): Having separated from the afflictions of living beings, one brings forth the joy of "taking Dhyana bliss as food" and "filled with the joy of Dharma." Leaving the topsy-turvy confusion of living beings, one advances along the Bodhi path of the sages. Arriving at the First Dhyana isn't something you can fake nor claim for yourself. You need a Good and Wise Advisor to certify that you have indeed arrived at this state. There is one proof to attest whether or not you have reached this state, i.e. cessation of breathing. You do not inhale or exhale, even though you are not dead. This is known as entering the Samadhi of the First Dhyana. It is different from being asleep. You should not think that going to sleep is the same as entering samadhi. When you are sleeping, you continue to breathe, and you
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以你的呼吸氣斷了沒有？善知識一看就知道，你要是說：「我覺得
我沒氣了！」這是假的，是冒充的。你若知道，那根本未入初禪！所以
不能拿假牌當真貨賣。這裏頭若細
分析起來，有大塊文章可以寫，很
多理論可以說。不過說那麼多，反
而是障礙，故說一點點，免得你們
生貪高起邪見，說自己入了初禪
（離生喜樂地），這真是騙人。

二禪天，「定生喜樂地」：二
禪天的境界更進一步，不單單呼吸
氣沒有了，連脈搏也停止了。這種
境界也不是你自己知道或自己說
的，你若說你覺得，你怎麼會覺
得？你根本沒入定，想冒充騙人
啊？三禪天，「離喜妙樂地」：到
了三禪天境界，呼吸、脈搏都停止，
連慾念也沒有了。三禪天，離開歡
喜，捨了味禪，不貪著味禪的舒適
定，絕無耽著。這個境界比初禪、
二禪又高了許多，這個時候周身每
個毛孔皆歡喜異常，眉開眼笑，高
興得不得了！

四禪天，「捨念清淨地」：這
時候什麼都沒有，「一念不生全體
現」，到了「千潭有水千潭月，萬
里無雲萬里天」的境界，處處都在
說法，所謂「落花流水演摩訶」。
這種境界不是自己能知道的，不能
說：「我到了四禪天。」你這樣是
大我慢，打大妄語呢！這都要由善
知識印證才算的。

善知識為什麼叫明眼人呢？
因為他一看就知道了，知道你的功
夫到什麼程度。你想去考一考他，
may even snore so loudly it distracts your neighbors. A
Good and Wise Advisor can tell immediately whether or not
your breath has stopped. If you say, "I feel like my breath has
stopped!" that is falsification; you’re faking it. If you know
when you have stopped breathing, then you haven't even
entered the First Dhyana! So do not sell bogus goods as the
authentic brand. If I were to go into this in detail, there are
lots of principles that could be talked about, and I could
write a whole essay on this. But if I say too much, it only
creates obstacles. Therefore, I've just said a little bit to pre-
vent you from becoming arrogant and misled by deviant
views and claiming to have entered the First Dhyana
(Ground of Joy Arising from Separation). That's really
cheating people.

Second Dhyana Heavens (Ground of Joy from Pro-
ducing Samadhi): Here, the state is one level higher. Not
only has breathing ceased, even the pulse has stopped.
Likewise, you will not know it when you arrive at this state,
and you cannot claim you have attained it. If you say you
feel like you have, how do you know? That proves you have
not entered samadhi at all, yet you try to fool people by fak-
ing it? Third Dhyana Heavens (Ground of Wondrous Bliss
from Leaving Joy): In this state, breathing and pulse have
cessated, thoughts too. In these heavens, you have separated
from joy and renounced flavorful Chan; you do not have the
slightest attachment or greed for the comfort and ease of
flavorful Chan. This state is much higher than that of the first
and second Dhyanas. Here, all the hair pores on your body
are blissful. Your eyes twinkle with laughter; you are in-
exorably delighted!

Fourth Dhyana Heavens (Ground of Purity from Re-
nouncing Thought): At this moment in time, there is nothing
at all. "When not a single thought arises, the entire substance
manifests." You have arrived at the state wherein--

A thousand pools of water,
a thousand reflections of the moon.
Tens of thousands stretch with no clouds,
tens of thousands stretch of clear sky.
"Falling flowers and flowing water proclaim the Mahayana."
Everything speaks the Dharma. However, you would not be
able to recognize this state yourself. Therefore, you can't
claim, "I've reached the Heavens of the Fourth Dhyana."
Doing so would constitute gross arrogance on your part, and
a big lie too. One must be certified by a Good and Wise
Advisor for it to count.

Why is a Good and Wise Advisor called a "clear-eyed
person"? It's because he can take one look at you and know
your level of cultivation. If you want to test him out, go
goes ahead! But he won't pay any attention to you. A true Good and Wise Advisor will not be tested by you, and he will not tell you everything just because you asked. You must draw near a Good and Wise Advisor for a long time, and then he may perhaps tell you what you have asked, though in a very subtle way. Sometimes he might use an analogy, or just say a few words. So, do not go around doing the drum roll, proclaiming, "We've all become Buddhas!" You would be telling a big lie and playing a big joke, and in the future, you would fall into the Hell of Pulling Out Tongues. That's really pathetic!

(The End of the Article)

(Continuing from page 15)

and under all situations. You should neither have a mind of greed and contention, nor a mind that forces things to happen. Do not study Buddhism in one hand, and in the other hand, grip ulterior motives. Do not be selfish and do not seek personal benefits. The most important point is to not lie. If we do not lie, then we have planted the roots of honesty. Those of you who have parents should practice filial piety. Those who have siblings should live together in harmony and not quarrel. When family members quarrel with each other, the warmth and joy of the home dissipate. Look at the world now. Every country and every family is fragmented. Families are shattered and dispersed; family members cannot get along in harmony.

A man and a woman should dwell together– the greatest of human relations. That is, live under one roof in harmony. Otherwise, if you quarrel and bicker everyday, you may have the structure of a family but not the warmth and happiness of the family."

"Not being happy means to not be content with what you have. Some family members disapprove of each other and are dissatisfied for being born into such a family. Filled with resentment, they start blaming everyone for their lot. This leads to divorce. When a father doesn't behave like a father, a mother doesn't behave like a mother, and a child doesn't behave like a child, quarreling and bickering will pervade the family, eliminating the possibility for harmony. Eventually, the family will drift apart, in mindfulness and in their sense of virtue, ending in divorce. Look. How many people are currently divorced in the world? There are more people who are getting divorced than getting married. Divorce, per se, does not matter. However, the process of divorces wreaks havoc in all nations globally. If you trace the cause of deterioration in the world, you would see that it starts with husbands and wives not getting along. Thus, we continue to witness further natural disasters and calamities."

(To be continued ...)
The present time is an era of chaos and disarray. Families fight with families; nations fight with nations. The world is filled with endless cacophony. Therefore, an emphasis on education is more important than ever. The teaching of Buddhadharma and the eight virtues are considerably the appropriate measures needed to reverse this tide. However, this task is extremely challenging.

In the City of Dharma Realm, Dharma Master Shr is determined to achieve the administration of education. Even though there are currently only 16 students at CDR, we can see a glimpse of hope from the way the students are learning. One of the students has been at CDR since she was five years old. One day I was teaching the class on Buddhism, and she asked me, "What is 'karma'?" Why am I recounting this particular situation? This year when I went to Tainjin Nankai University to visit a former teacher of mine, Professor Yeh Jiaying, I ran into an old classmate who was now a college professor. This old classmate asked me the same question, "What is 'karma'?". The fact that a five year-old and a college professor asked the same question makes me feel that an education grounded in Buddhadharma is extremely important.

I am hereby calling all of you to action. For those of you who can retire early, please do so and help with education at CDR. For those of you who have completed higher education and have free time outside of your personal obligations, please serve as a volunteer teacher at CDR and demonstrate the potential of volunteer teaching. This is the magic pill (solution) the Venerable Master prescribed for this world, and we must have faith. In addition, we must take action and put forth effort. Together, let
有信心還不夠，要有信力，要出一點力。大家一起辦教育。

這個世界，大家可以看得到，感覺到，周圍都是亂哄哄的，非常顛倒。假如沒有上人這麼多年來，流血汗，不休息，用心血來教我們，我們現在也是一片混亂，一片顛倒的。雖然不是好到哪裡去，但是至少知道是非黑白，知道何去何從。這已經很幸運了。假如沒有上人的教化，我們在這個混亂的世界，也是混亂一團。叫苦連天，卻不知苦從何來，更不知道要去滅苦。回頭是岸不是很容易的。很簡單，大家都沒有頭嘛。業力牽著你，回頭有多難啊！我們的事障就是不讓我們回頭。所以要多聽佛法，多親近三寶。用法水來泡它。泡得它跟豆子一樣，軟一點。這樣子我們才有效法。

我呼籲大家要重視八德的教育，佛法的教育。其實佛法不是深不可測的。但是我們一定要務實，要從眼前、近處著手。不要談玄說妙。我們忘記眼前的一步，想往前走好幾步。那是不務實，好高騖遠。等一下我想跟大家分享上人的一些開示。

上人說：「我們學佛的人不要好奇，不要好高騖遠。平常心是道。《人法地，地法天，天法道，道法自然。》你勉強做出什麼事情來，都與道不相應的。所以我們無論做什麼事，最好是任運而行，不加造作。有的人學佛學了一輩子，貪心比誰都大，我也不知道他是學的什麼佛。學佛，一切時，一切處，一切事，

(下轉至第13頁)

us work towards realizing the Venerable Master’s education objectives.

Everyone can see and feel the chaos around this world – things are in disarray and upside-down. For many years, the Venerable Master had tirelessly taught us; he never took a break despite toiling in sweat and blood. Had it not been for the Venerable Master’s teaching, we ourselves may be in a similar state of chaos and disarray. Even though we are not that much better off than others, at least we know what is right and what is wrong: we can tell black from white, and we understand our coming and going. Knowing this already makes us extremely fortunate. Had it not been for the Venerable Master's teachings, we would have been just as confused as everyone else in this chaotic world, crying in the sea of suffering, yet not knowing why we are suffering and how to end suffering. Returning to the shore is not easy, simply because we don't have any sense of direction due to our karmic obstructions. Our heavy karmic obstacles pull us away from the shore. Hence, we have to listen to and study Buddhadharma and draw near the Triple Jewel. Akin to how one softens beans by soaking them in water, we have to immerse ourselves in dharma water to lessen our karmic obstacles so that we can return to the shore.

I am calling upon all of you to value the teachings of the eight virtues and Buddhadharma. In fact, Buddhadharma is not hard to fathom. However, we need to be pragmatic. We have to start with what's in front of us. It's no use talking about the mystical and the mysterious. Do not skip the step right in front of us and aspire to jump several steps ahead. That's not being pragmatic – that's aiming too high. I want to share with all of you some excerpts from the Venerable Master's instructional talk.

The Venerable Master said, "When learning the Buddhadharma, do not be inquisitive and brash. An ordinary mind is the Way. The law of humans comes from the earth; the law of earth comes from heaven; the law of heaven comes from the Way; the Way accords with nature. If you force something to occur, you do not accord with the Way. Therefore, whatever we do, we should follow the course of nature and should not make things up. Some people have been learning Buddhadharma all their lives, yet their greed stands larger in size than anyone else’s. I don't know what kind of Buddhism they're learning. When studying Buddhism, you should follow the course of nature every time, everywhere,

(Continuation in Page 13)
### Schedule of Weekly Events – November and December of 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>日期</th>
<th>法會</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/4 (星期日)</td>
<td>夏令時間結束（撥回1小時）Return to Standard Time at 2:00 am地藏經 Recitation of Earth Store Sutra 8:00 am — 3:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11 (星期日)</td>
<td>念佛法會 Amitabha Buddha Recitation 8:00 am — 2:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/17 ~ 11/25</td>
<td>梁皇寶懺 The Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Lyang 8:00 am - 5:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11/17 (星期六) 3:00 pm 灑淨 Purifying the Boundaries</td>
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<td></td>
<td>11/18 (星期日) 8:00 am 起香 Start of Repentance Ceremony</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11/25 (星期日) 繼滿日 Completion of Repentance Ceremony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/2 (星期日)</td>
<td>楞嚴經 Recitation of Shurangama Sutra 8:00 am — 3:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/9 (星期日)</td>
<td>楞嚴經 Recitation of Shurangama Sutra 8:00 am — 3:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/16 (星期日)</td>
<td>楞嚴經 Recitation of Shurangama Sutra 8:00 am — 3:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/23 (星期日)</td>
<td>慶祝阿彌陀佛聖誕法會 Celebration of Amitabha Buddha’s Birthday</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>念佛法會 Amitabha Buddha Recitation 8:00 am — 3:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/30 (星期日)</td>
<td>地藏經 Recitation of Earth Store Sutra 8:00 am — 3:00 pm</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

～常思有日無日，莫待無時想有時～

*Always think of the day as if there is no tomorrow.*

*Do not wait until there is no time and try to find time.*