



The Supreme Master Ching Hai The Key of Immediate Enlightenment 1



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The Supra-Worldly Sound

Spoken by Supreme Master Ching Hai
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There are two kinds of sounds: the worldly sound and the super-worldly Sound. The worldly sound is very important to our sensual and mental comfort, but the super-worldly Sound draws us back to God or the Buddha Land.

First we shall discuss the worldly sound and its importance.

We all know that an infant cries for many reasons, but most of the time not for food or for a change of diaper. If we then give it a little hug or speak to it or sing a song, it will stop crying. If we let it hear the ringing of bells or other melodious sounds, it will laugh instantly and start kicking in the air with joy and happiness.

Why is it that children love these sounds so much? It is because when they were in the mothers' wombs, they have already heard these melodies; the only difference is that these

Melodies in the womb were that of transcendental nature. While in the mothers' wombs, they were connected with this Super-Sound or the Source of All Love, Bliss and Power, which is simply described by many as God, Tao or Buddha Nature. This inner wondrous Sound we shall discuss later.

The fetus, while in the mother's womb, eats nothing. Inside there is no air, no sunlight, and the body hangs upside down in the watery space, but it does not matter to it at all. The fetus grows at an incredible rate under such conditions, that if it continued to do so it would be as tall as the sky after being born.

When it is in the mother's womb, it is in constant contact with the inner Sound, which nourishes and comforts it. But after it is born, it is disconnected from the Sound; then it begins to feel lonely and unhappy, and cry at the first contact with the outer world! No child has ever been born laughing. It feels a great loss as the Sound is severed from it. Moreover, as its delicate skin is exposed to the rough air and polluted environment of our world, it feels an almost unbearable pain at birth; but the child cannot speak for itself, so we can not understand its pains.

So, when the baby hears some melodious sounds it will stop crying for a while, feeling somehow comforted, mistaking those for the blissful Sounds it used to hear while still in its mother's womb.

There are people with weakened nervous systems who have to rest in some hospitals which are specialized in this field. The physicians there would recommend their listening to

some soothing and sweet music, which helps them to some remarkable extent to rebuild their mental equilibrium. Sometimes, after a day's hard work, we come home and listen to some peaceful music, and then we also feel a sense of calmness and peace. We feel relaxed and comforted a great deal. Is it not so? Even the laborers in the field or in the factory work better with music to accompany them. So, obviously, music is very necessary to our mental and physical well-being. Since time immemorial, music has been a must to humankind in this world. Even animals feel attracted to music. Plants are supposed to grow faster with it.

If the outer melody is so important to all beings, the inner celestial, wondrous Sound must be even more enchanting and full of Grace and Blessing. It vibrates within all lives and sustains the whole universe.

Even if there is lots of worldly music at home, even when we all have the TV, radio and tape recorder to entertain us, we still feel sometimes unsatisfied, as if something were missing, but we know not what. So we go out to find some peace and comfort in the country side, in the mountains, at the riverside..., listening to natural sounds of the wind blowing through the leaves, to the birds singing, and to the rushing sounds of the river. Then there are people who keep dogs, cats, birds or other pets and who grow vegetables and house plants, not because they cannot bear the city's atmosphere but because of the need to surround themselves with natural substitutes, which are much closer to our inner Nature and thus bring some comfort to our souls.

Many nations forbid the destroying of the natural environment or the hunting of wild beasts. It is also because of the necessity to balance human inner peace and security.

Even as the sounds of the outer world affect human existence to such an extent, we should know that there is the super-worldly Sound, known as the inner Melody, which has far more incredible Power; the contact with which brings all solace to our restless hearts and solves all the mysteries of life! This inner Melody can heal all wounds, fulfill all desires, and quench all worldly thirst. It is all-powerful and all love. It is because we are made of this Sound, that the contact with it brings peace and contentment to our hearts. This is what the Bible means by ***In the beginning was the ‘Word’ (Sound), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; everything was made by this, and nothing that was made was not made by this.*** The Buddhist sutras or Buddha’s spoken words also mentioned the inner Sound, the supra-worldly Sound, such as the sound similar to sea waves, to the beating of drums, to the blowing of trumpets, to the sound of thunder, of heavenly beings, of bells, of the conch, of seashells, etc... The Surangama Sutra says that all Buddhas rely on this Sound Stream to save sentient beings, and the Bodhisattvas (Saints) and other beings rely on this Sound Stream to go back to their original Source. There are also the mention of the position of the liberated Saints, known as the Stream Enterers; others as the Sound Hearers, or ‘Shen Wuan’ in Chinese term.

In the Fa-Hua Sutra, which talks about the Lotus Method, Buddha declared that those who practiced this method would

be able to hear all outer and inner sounds equally clear, even the sounds of devas (heavenly beings) and ghosts and the sounds of different worlds and beings, because their inner hearing was opened. These sounds are very familiar to those who practice the Quan Yin Method – or the Lotus Method. They represent a higher consciousness, a higher wisdom than that which exists in our world. It is the incredible effect brought by the contact with these sounds that we treasure.

Higher Sounds represent the higher worlds of higher wisdom. After listening to such Sounds, our whole beings change, our whole outlooks and viewpoints alter greatly for the best. Our karmic burdens or the bad influences of past misdeeds fall off and the bondage of this physical world breaks away from us. All this visible and more invisible Grace follows the minute we are reunited with this Sound, the Source of all Love, Bliss and Knowledge. We do not have to wait for long and arduous years of prayers and ascetic practice to reap the due Blessing. For ***Lo and behold, the Kingdom of God is within you.*** The wondrous Sound will cleanse off all the undesirable traces of the so-called previous karma, or as the Bible says, ‘the original sin.’ It is like a mighty river which carries along with its current all ugly garbage.

Since all things are made of this Word or Sound, sin or karma is of no exception! So we can rely on this original Source of all things to cleanse off its own mistakes! This Inner Sound is the Great Creative Force of the cosmos. It is a Vibration that sustains and nourishes all things. Its manifestation in the outer world can be heard as the natural melodies such as the sound of the wind, the water, the birds, insects, etc., which are the lower

manifestation that can be heard by the physical ears. There are more subtle and higher Sounds which are inaudible to the mortal sense, because they vibrate in the higher dimensions different from that of our physical world. To catch these higher Sounds we must raise our own levels to those worlds beyond our senses. For example, now you are in this lecture room and can only hear Master speak; if you want to listen to the sea waves, you must go to the seashore. Similarly, to hear the inner and higher Sounds we must bring our consciousness to those higher levels.

The way to these higher dimensions lies in the Sound itself, which we simply follow back to its original Source. All the worlds, high or low, are “stringed” together by this inner Sound; all these worlds are made by this Sound or Word. The so-called original sin or karma is also made by it. As defilements are made by this Vibration or Sound Stream, we must rely on its own more powerful Source to cleanse off its own rough obstacles or offspring. Perhaps it was for this reason that Gautama Buddha declared that ***Defilement is enlightenment!***

This is not at all against logic, if we think carefully: the first time we transmigrated into this world, where did we get these defilements? From where did they come to attach themselves to us, the helpless and innocent? So we should know that originally there was no sin, no defilement, for all things without exception were made by this inner Sound or Word. If we have ‘sin,’ it is only the superficial appearance, the infection of the outer environments. It was not inborn within us. Understand?

However, even if you hear Master say that we had no defilements originally, by no means will all your defilements vanish, because only understanding intellectually will not do. To get rid of this great burden which we have collected since time immemorial, the inner all-powerful Vibration or super-worldly Sound is needed.

Of course, listening to the Saints' discourses or coming into contact with such persons does help us in cleansing some of the surface and rough defilements, and even reading holy scriptures would produce some purifying effects. But there are some deep-rooted and subtle traces of impurity which cannot be washed off so easily. It requires constant purification by the Sound Stream from the inside. Hence it needs the practice of the Quan Yin Method to listen to the inner wondrous Sound Current.

Because this Sound Stream has incredible Force, if we come in contact with it, any particle of sin will be gradually washed off. This invisible Force or Sound Stream cannot be perceived by ordinary senses. If we want to get in touch with it, we must raise our level to that of the higher worlds, where the Sound Current begins to be audible. At these levels we know and see things of the higher dimensions, and our wisdom is not that of the ordinary human beings but is raised up gradually to that of Godly Nature.

When we are still at this lower level, we can only perceive the sounds of this world, such as the sound of the birds, of the water, of the wind, of the insects, etc., or any other sounds of this physical dimension. If we want to hear the higher Sounds and see the higher worlds, our higher senses must be developed

or opened. To have this fortune, we must seek someone who has not only her own inner perception developed to the highest degree but also has the ability to help us develop our own.

Therefore it requires a Guide, who is a Master of the Way, who is like a traveling guide, who knows everything on the road ahead. If we want to go to the higher worlds, only reading about them will not do. The religious scriptures only describe these worlds, just like a land map. To really know the land, we have to go there in person. And if we go with a guide, it is safer and quicker for us. Reading the map serves to stimulate our desire to visit the place. Similarly, reading the scriptures makes us more eager to search for those true worlds. If we do not have a sense of discrimination and are forgetful of its lower purpose, then we are bound to be trapped in this lower mental level of understanding without being able to rise to the Ultimate reach.

There are those who have the key to the higher dimensions, who can open the new worlds for us and let us step inside for a visit or a permanent residence.

We often say that we have defilements or sins. How do we know this? It is because our life is full of problems and misery, sometimes even without any apparent reasons. Although on the surface our life seems to be satisfactory, especially on the material side: we have plenty of money, we have a good marriage and lovely children; everyone envies our social status. But in reality we may not even feel happy, and we can hardly escape all the pains and sorrow that human beings must experience. This is the so-called karma or the effect of

our wrong doings in the past or in the present. Sometimes the effects come almost immediately, and sometimes not so quickly or so obviously. Whether bad or good, every action must bear fruit at some time in a person's life. We then reap what we have sown previously. This is the unmistakable law of cause and effect, as the Bible also mentions: ***As you sow, so shall you reap***, and as Buddhists call: 'karma.'

Furthermore, as we are disconnected with the Almighty Power, which is manifested as the Super-worldly inner Sound, we feel always a sense of loss and loneliness in this world, no matter how much material comfort is offered to us, or even if we are given the whole world. In fact, the higher the position, the greater the burden. "Uneasy lies the head that bears the crown." Worldly achievements are never the highest. Worldly happiness and enjoyments are never of everlasting nature. The soul within us, the Real Man always longs for the highest and the noblest Bliss; and in this world nothing of material nature will offer it any real value. Therefore, we often feel such unavoidable loneliness creeping in at any moment, making us forever feeling insecure and dissatisfied.

Only when we are reconnected with the inner Sound Current, that Source of all Glory and Bliss, and bathe ourselves again in this Water of Immortality, will we then know the happiness and joy heretofore unknown to us.

For example, our body is whole and healthy; but if suddenly someone severed one of our arms, would we thus not feel painful? Even though the cut-off arm is still there for us to see,

having not changed its shape, but it is now separated from our body and therefore has no more life and use. It looks strange, pitiful and dead! In no time, it will become rotten. If we, however, want it to resume its original function, the arm has to be reattached to its previous place of our body.

In Germany, the surgeons have already succeeded in the art of reattaching the severed limbs to the body of the patients. This is a very difficult task, sewing each and every single cell back together to give them life again. After the treatment, the separated limb can resume its original function. At that time the limb begins to feel contentment, and the body also feels joyful after the ‘happy reunion.’

The same with our invisible ‘Light body.’ If it is disconnected with the great Power Source, called the inner Sound Current, we feel the inevitable pains and sorrows of this material world. If, however, we are again connected with this Source of all Love and Harmony, we will again experience great joy and bliss. While we are separated from this Inner Sound or priceless treasure, we run into countless troubles. It is like a broken arm severed from the body after an accident: it is covered with dust and looks dead and miserably out of shape. All this is not the fault of the poor broken arm, but because of the accident.

We human beings are also the same. Since our birth we are disconnected from the Source of all Power and hence running into many predicaments without real solutions. Even if we are unwilling to face them, they would run forward to meet us. This is what is meant by so-called fate. Sometimes it is caused by

the outer environment or circumstances. For example, a man, a good citizen, has a family and life without material difficulties. Then one day a disaster happens, and all his possessions are gone. On top of that, his wife becomes ill and his children are in danger of dying from hunger. But he has not yet been able to find a job and no one is there to help him. Facing this desperate situation, in order to save himself and his family, he has to go out and steal something and therefore commits an unlawful act. It is the circumstances that forced him to act against his own will, not that he normally would do so.

Similarly, we originally had no sin. It is only the outer dust that attaches itself to our outer coat. If we are connected again with the Water of Life, it will wash all the undesirable defilements away, giving us the primal Glory that we all inherit. While we are still disconnected from this Source of Power, if we are fortunate enough to meet someone who is steeped in this Sound Stream and can even lend us some from her own Treasure, we will automatically derive some Grace and Blessings from God, as the person herself is in daily contact with God or the Source of all Love and Glory, and just a glance from her God-laden eyes is enough to fill us with Joy and Bliss. We could even soar into Samadhi (God ecstasy) ourselves, and forget all our worldly burdens.

This is the real Love of the Highest, or so-called the Real Saint, the Real Master. If we come to their feet, a great deal of our karma will be washed away; but it will be best for us, if we ourselves know where the Sound Source is and bathe ourselves therein. Even if I myself know where the Source of the Water

is and can quench your thirst for a while, it is still limited and if I stop giving it to you, then you will have none. But if I show you where the Water Stream is, then you will have a supply forever, and can even give it to anyone who needs it.

Just a while ago, I mentioned the story of the severed arm. If it is not set back again to its original place on the body, the color of its flesh will change and it will die and become rotten in no time. The same with us. If we do not find the union with our Source of Life, we will die and wither like dry twigs.

I think there are many countries which have this kind of surgery service nowadays, is that not so? In West Germany there are hospitals specialized in this work, though not many. There are also not many doctors who are skilled in this field, because if one wishes to perfect his task one must devote many years of his life to it. Furthermore, the work demands whole-hearted attention and tremendous patience. Each and every single cell has to be mended and sewn back together in such a delicate fashion, as if the arm had never been severed from the body; otherwise the blood cannot flow through, and the cells will die out, then the process will be a waste of time and effort. It is indeed an extra-ordinary life-saving task. No wonder people look upon these surgeons as "God." These doctors not only practice hard during their apprenticeship, but also have to work even harder after they are qualified. Surgery of this kind demands hours or even a whole day of delicate attention and single-minded labor. During the time of surgery, no doctor can move away from his work or be careless with his movements. The hands have to be perfectly still and steady, for any wrong

move will spoil the whole work! After a successful operation of this nature, the severed arm will 'live' and function as normal. Isn't it an incredible event?

A human life is very similar. We are mostly unhappy with our lots, no matter how many material comforts life offers us, because we are separated from our Great and Real Self. Just like a severed limb, if we are not 'sewn' back to the original place, we will be 'rotten' in time and meanwhile feel the misery of separation. To be united again with our Selves, we must seek out a perfect 'Surgeon,' who is able to 'sew' us back to 'Life.'

So let us be 'sewn' back to that original Self, the Source of all Power and Love, of all Bliss and happiness, of all satisfaction and Glory. This Source of eternal Joy is within us, is called God, the Kingdom of Heaven, Tao, Buddha Nature or the Great Self. Now we are the small self, which is a part of this Great Self. Because we are separated from the Great Self, we feel such an unexplainable loneliness, we feel miserable and unhappy like the arm that has been severed from its body, without a spark of life in it. Only after it is reunited with the body does its blood begin to flow once more through its veins and it begins to live again.

The Sound Stream is the only Power that helps us to be united again with our Great Source. It unites the whole cosmos together. Actually all things are 'stringed' together by it; only sometimes, as in the case with the most of us, the connection is obstructed. If we do not seek some way to repair it, then the connection may be lost forever (or almost forever); then we

will be dragged along the wheel of transmigration in the lower worlds, being born again and again in the realms of Asura, humans, animals, hungry spirits or hells, not being able to rise to the free and noble spiritual worlds of Saints and God.

As mentioned above, to become a specialized surgeon, who can unite the severed limbs back to the body and make them function again as before, one must possess a high degree of intelligence and real love for humankind, apart from not fearing hard labor and sacrifice and self discipline; even then, one still has to pass through many tests in order to be selected. And as those professors who are capable in this art are also very few, so if there are too many candidates, then most of them can only stand by or watch the performance, not having the chance to practice by themselves before they have waited a long time. At least it was so in one of the hospitals I knew of in Germany. The whole situation makes it difficult to become such a specialist in the art of surgery. After one is qualified, not only can one save the life of many but also can teach others to be like him. No wonder people respect such persons as “God.”

Now, to unite just a severed arm to its body demands so many conditions and strenuous work as well as extra-ordinary discipline. Can we imagine how many thousand times more so, if one is to be the ‘Doctor of the Soul’?

As we know, while sewing the broken limb back to its body, those surgeons have to devote their whole concentration to the task, even if it means to go on without food or rest for long hours, because the cells will die quickly, and any mistake or

undue delay means life and death to the patient concerned. For as the limb reaches the surgery room, it has been chilled for hours, not having the freshness of ordinary flesh. If prolonged too long, the cells will become completely useless. We must appreciate greatly their work pressure under such circumstances and have sympathy for these physicians. It is all for the sake of the patients that they have to sacrifice thus.

The same with a Real Master, who can unite the soul back to its Real Self again. There is no selfish motive of the Master but her whole heart and mind which are all dedicated for the well-being of others. While saving the souls of the disciples, the Master has to undergo much untold hardship and pain due to the karmic load which is passed on to her, in order to set the disciples free of their enormous burdens. No one can imagine the discomfort and pain a Master has to go through for her beloved children. She washes them and makes them shine again in glory while she herself bears all the consequences from their past misdeeds. She does all this and never utters a word of complaint, like a loving mother sacrificing all for her children's comfort, like the loving doctor who is dedicated to the well-being of his patients.

Since ancient times, the Real Masters have been like those doctors, healing the wounds of human souls and uniting them back to the Source, bringing them back to Life again, and wiping out all their tears and sorrow of separation. Having attained the highest Power, they distribute it freely to those in need.

The Quan Yin Method of meditation – the method of

transcendental hearing and seeing – will help anyone to become such a soul-healing Doctor. Welcome to practice with us. The more people the better; the world needs such noble volunteers. There are so many trials and tribulations in this bitter sea of existence, so we should all work hard to attain the highest degree in order to serve human beings as well as all other beings at large in healing their hearts and souls.

Q: Dear Master, yesterday I attended Your lecture and You gave me some 'blessed food.' Back at home, while reading some of Your discourses, I ate the blessed food also. Then suddenly there was some power raising within me. I felt so comfortable and it was new to me. Is there really some power in those cakes?

M: You yourself have experienced it, then why ask? Your very question has proved the answer. (Laughter) Anything the Master gives you carries 'life saving Power' in it. If you fear to be saved, then you had better not eat them again. (Laughter) Otherwise you will be blessed and may not have to transmigrate to this miserable world again. If you still love this world, don't eat the cakes blessed by Master!

Q: Previously, I have tried self-taught meditation and heard some inner sound; but for fear of running into the net of illusion, I stopped practicing. Is it correct?

M: Right. Inner Sounds vary greatly; some are good and helpful for the spiritual progress, while some are bad and should be ignored. A real and experienced Master will teach you how to discriminate them and even protect you from all harm. If you are without such a Master, it is correct that you have ignored it!