



The Supreme Master Ching Hai

The Key of Immediate Enlightenment 2



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Book 2

The Supreme Master Ching Hai
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A Little Message

In speaking of God, or the Supreme Spirit, Master instructs us to use original non-sexist terms to avoid the argument about whether God is a She or a He.

She + He = Hes (as in Bless)

Her + Him = Hirm (as in Firm)

Hers + His = Hiers (as in Dear)

Example: When God wants, Hes makes things happen according to Hiers will to suit Hirmself.

As a creator of artistic designs as well as a spiritual teacher, Supreme Master Ching Hai loves all expressions of inner beauty. It is for this reason that She refers to Vietnam as “Au Lac” and Taiwan as “Formosa.” Au Lac is the ancient name of Vietnam and means “happiness.” And the name Formosa, meaning “beautiful,” reflects more completely the beauty of the island and its people. Master feels that using these names brings spiritual elevation and luck to the land and its inhabitants.

Walk the Way of Love

Footsteps of a Living Enlightened Master

We will search high and low
For a little love,
For a little love,
To share with all beings
In all corners of the world.

Supreme Master Ching Hai, as She has affectionately become known to those who have had the pleasure to meet or work with Her, lives a message that walks the way of love.

A renowned humanitarian, artist and spiritual visionary, Her love and assistance has extended beyond all cultural and racial boundaries to millions of people around the world, including the needy and homeless, institutions of medical research on AIDS and cancer, war veterans of the United States of America, the disadvantaged elderly, the physically and mentally handicapped, refugees, and victims of natural disasters such as, earthquakes, floods, typhoons and fires. Not only are human beings the blessed beneficiaries of Her kindness, animals from different species are also the recipients of Her boundless benevolence.

Through these works, we witness countless reminders of

compassion which is the trademark of this caring lady and the international foundation that has grown out of Her loving example. “Whatever we can share, we begin with sharing. Then we’ll feel a subtle change within ourselves - more love will be pouring into our consciousness, and then we will be aware of something. That is the beginning. We are here to learn, to learn to grow as well as to learn to use our power, our limitless power of love and creativity in order to make the world a better place wherever we happen to be.”

Her Early Years

Supreme Master Ching Hai was born in central Au Lac. During Her early years, She was often found helping hospital patients and the needy, as well as injured animals, in whichever way She could. As a young adult, She moved to Europe to study and continued there as a translator for the Red Cross. She soon discovered that pain and suffering exist in all cultures and in all corners of the globe, and Her search for the remedy to this became the foremost goal in Her life. She was happily married at the time to a German physician, and although it was an extremely difficult decision for both of them, Her husband agreed to a separation. She then embarked on what became a two-year journey in search for spiritual understanding.

Himalayan Pilgrimage

Finally, in the deepest reaches of the Himalayas in India, She found an enlightened Master who imparted to Her the Quan Yin Method, a meditation technique which contem-

plates on the inner Light and Sound. After a period of practice, She became fully enlightened.

Soon after Her return from the Himalayas, at the earnest request of those around Her, Master Ching Hai shared the Quan Yin Method with others, encouraging them to look within to find their own greatness. People from all walks of life found that through the Quan Yin Method of meditation, they attained greater fulfillment, happiness, and peace in their daily lives. Before long, invitations arrived from the United States, Europe, Asia, Australia, Africa and South America as well as important organizations for Master Ching Hai to give lectures.

Beautify the World We Live In

As well as being a noble example of humanitarian aid, Master Ching Hai also encourages people to beautify the world we live in. Through meditating with the Quan Yin Method, Master Ching Hai has realized many spontaneous talents that She expresses through artistic paintings and creations, including an exquisite array of lighting lamps, music and poetry, and aesthetic jewelry and clothing designs, expressing the inner and outer beauty of the cultures and peoples She has met. In 1995, upon the demand of the public, Her clothing creations were toured on the international fashion circuit, including London, Paris, Milan, and New York. The income generated from Her artistic creations has enabled Supreme Master Ching Hai to create an independent source of funding for humanitarian activities, in support of Her noble mission of assisting God's children in their times of need.

Recognition and Master's Dream

Although She does not seek acknowledgement of any kind, in recognition of Her selfless assistance, Supreme Master Ching Hai has been given awards worldwide by government officials and private organizations on numerous occasions. They include the World Peace Award, the World Spiritual Leadership Award, Award for Promotion of Human Rights, World Citizen Humanitarian Award, Award for Outstanding Public Service to Humankind. 2006 Gusi Peace Prize, Los Angeles Music Week Certificate of Commendation, and First Place Silver for the 27th Annual Telly Awards, 2006. In addition, October 25 and February 22 have been proclaimed as the Supreme Master Ching Hai Day in the United States. As former Mayor Frank Fasi of Honolulu states, "She is the light of a great person, an angel of mercy for all of us."

Supreme Master Ching Hai is one of the truly dedicated people of this era helping others find and create a beautiful vision of our future. Many great people in history have had a dream, and in Her own words, so does Supreme Master Ching Hai:

"I dream that the whole world will become peaceful.

I dream that all the killing will stop.

I dream that all the children will walk in peace and harmony,

*I dream that all the nations will shake hands with each other,
protect each other and help each other.*

I dream that our beautiful planet will not be destroyed.

*It takes billion, billion and trillions of years to produce this planet
and it's so beautiful, so wonderful.*

I dream that it will continue, but in peace, beauty and love."

What Is Enlightenment?

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
March 5, 1987
Taipei, Formosa
(Originally in Chinese)

We've often heard people say that they saw Buddha (fully enlightened being) or Bodhisattva (enlightened being). But is it so easy? I don't think so.

Once, the past old monk Guang Chin replied with a smile to a Buddhist teacher who said he could see Quan Yin Bodhisattva looking very stately, "Really? So easy?" Considerably advanced in spiritual practice, he knew it's not so easy to see a Buddha or Bodhisattva. It must be that "the flower is open,"

meaning the wisdom-eye is open, before you can see a Buddha or Bodhisattva. So today let's talk about how to open the wisdom-eye.

A phrase often mentioned is, "When the flower is open, one shall see Buddha and realize eternity." From that many questions arise: What kind of flower is that? How does it open? Do we have this flower? Do you know where it is? (*Someone answers: The word "flower" implies our heart.*) Our heart? But how can our heart open? OK, we may say it is the heart; if so, where is this heart? (*Someone answers: It fills the whole universe.*) Is your heart really so big? I can't believe it. It's not possible a "flower" can be so big as to pervade the whole universe. (*Someone says: Our heart is the same as Buddha's.*) How could it be so? (*Someone answers: Because Buddha Nature in all beings is equivalent.*) That's right, but your heart makes the difference; otherwise you should have seen that man and woman are the same. Do you, now? (*Someone replies: The Nature, the Original Face of the heart, is the same.*) Yes, but you haven't found it yet. Isn't it so? (*Someone replies: Yes.*) Then let's see how to find this "flower."

There are many "flowers" in our body, which are called "chakras" in yoga, or body centers; and yesterday I talked about the lower ones. They all look like the lotus flowers. The kind of lotus flower – with a thousand leaves, that Shakyamuni Buddha sat on to preach the Surangama Sutra – you can see in the First World, when in practice you reach the top, the roof of the First World. But about this kind of inner vision I will not talk here. I leave it for you to practice and experience yourselves. Today I only want to tell you that we have so many lotus flowers in the body, including the one over here, (Master

points to the wisdom-eye) which you shall see only with the wisdom-eye, not the physical eyes. On other ones lower than this I will talk some other time.

Inside this lotus flower (at the center of the forehead) is the “mani pearl.” When the flower is open we shall find the “mani pearl.” “To open the flower” means to open the wisdom-eye or the so-called Buddha eye, or to get enlightened. There are different sayings as the ancient Masters used many realistic words to describe the condition. But now, if I say, “The flower opens here” (at the center of the forehead) you will neither know what it's like nor see where it is. Only my students who have seen it, experienced it, will know what I'm talking about.

Now let's suppose you believe what I've said, that here is a lotus flower and when it is open we shall see Buddha. Then what kind of Buddha shall we see? Amitabha? Quan Yin Bodhisattva? Both might appear to you, but whatever form we see is still not real. So, to see Buddha actually means to see our own Buddha Nature, our Real Nature, our “Real Face before yesterday.” Does anyone here know what the Buddha Nature looks like?

Most of you must have heard of a Buddhist mantra: “Om mani padma hum.” Do you know what's the meaning of it? It means the mani pearl is in the lotus flower. “Mani” is the mani pearl, and “padma,” the lotus flower. That's why there was a great Buddhist master in Tibet whose name was Padmasambhava, meaning born from the lotus flower.

So this mantra has its meaning: The mani pearl is in the lotus flower. That's why we could not get any special inspiration just reciting “Om mani padma hum.” We must at first un-

derstand the deep meaning it implies. This is a mantra that the Masters of old said to remind their disciples that the “pearl” lays in the lotus flower; that they should, every day, practice the method, practice with the lotus flower where the pearl is in. It's just as some of my words, only my disciples can understand and you don't. And because of the tacit understanding between the Master and the disciples, sometimes I only use the gesture, without speaking anything. Still they can catch what I am going to say.

After initiation there's no need for me to teach them anything in particular. I can make them understand what my instructions to their problems are, only by my hand gesticulation or just reminding them to repeat the Holy Names. This you non-initiates might mistake for reciting the Amitabha Buddha's name and also want to imitate, but it is not. Only my disciples will know what and how to recite, and not by lip service, as people usually do, which is not the real “recitation of Holy Names.”

Similarly, if we now just dumbly read the Scriptures and recite “Om mani padma hum,” thinking it's a mysterious and useful incantation, then even for a long time we still won't get anywhere except that, one day, perhaps, some intuitive response will crop out – as a result of your deep concentration in recitation, not from the mantra itself. It must be pointed up again that the ancient Masters taught their disciples this mantra only as the reminder of the practice, and certainly it has become esoteric in the eyes of the outsiders because they themselves cannot understand it.

For example, when I tell my disciples, “Repeat the Holy Names,” it is also an “esoteric mantra.” Suppose one of my

disciples met with a difficulty in practice and could approach me about it only through my other disciples because of some inconvenience. Then I might say, “Tell him to repeat the Holy Names. It’s a knack.” Or else I might say, “Tell him to focus the heart on the center.” In either case they both would understand what I meant. But the non-initiates would not. They would wonder, “What did She mean by that? Where’s the center? Where is this heart? Why?” Therefore to us this sentence is a “secret mantra” because it’s very useful. It will enable them to progress much better in practice – if they can bear this “mantra” in mind every day. It is a secret incantation not because he just intones the words: “Focus the attention on the center. Focus the attention on the center... ,” but because he understands it and keeps it in mind.

Therefore, “Om mani padma hum” was a brief instruction that the Ch’an (Zen, or meditation) Masters in the old times taught to help their disciples, who were either in trouble or in failure or not able to concentrate the mind on practice. The words reminded these disciples of the method, the “pearl in lotus flower” method. That is, to always keep the mind on the “lotus flower” so as to find the real “pearl.”

But nowadays people merely recite it without any idea of its original meaning. So, even if they will recite it the whole day long, it will do no good. Indeed, no use. This I can seal however many times you ask to assure you, because they simply do not understand this very profound method. They have no idea why the old Masters taught it. That’s why they can’t accomplish the practice.

To cite another example. During the last 7-day retreat, many of my disciples got together to meditate. When I saw

some of them need corrections, I walked up to one whose mind got absent, telling him to repeat the Holy Names. To another one I said, “Concentrate your mind on the center.” Then to still another one I said nothing, just stretching out five fingers. Because at that time they had respective problems demanding different instructions, so I taught them in varied manners, but the method was the same. At the time, suppose there were other people, non-initiates, also doing the meditation together with us in their own ways of practice, such as visualizing the nose, the lower part of abdomen, the breath, etc.; if they saw me doing all this, which they couldn't understand, they would wonder, “Why is this Master teaching all the mix?”

Therefore to get enlightenment one must first find the right method. He can't just indiscriminately hold to any method and practice and think he's for sure to get enlightened, because if he has no knowledge of what enlightenment is, then even though he just keeps on practicing he will not know whether he himself, after all, is enlightened or not. Therefore now I'll talk about what “enlightenment” is.

I think there were Chinese ancestors very well advanced in practice, who have created so many manifested Chinese characters. In Chinese enlightenment is “Wu,” and “Wu” means “Ming Bai” (to realize) of which the character “Ming” is composed of “Jih” (the sun) on the left and “Yueh” (the moon) on the right. It means there is the light of the sun, of the moon, in the state of enlightenment. And that's what really happens – one may see, from “inside,” the sun, the moon, when or after he gets enlightened.

At this point it may have reminded some of you who have practiced Ch'an (Zen, or meditation), that sometimes the Zen

master will go about in the meditating hall, holding a wooden block in the hand and asking disciples, "Where is the sun?" Instead of telling you how to find it he will just keep on asking. If you say, "We can't see the sun today because it is winter now," he will beat you with the wooden block. And if you reply, "It is now in the west," he also will not agree. Then if you say the sun has just risen in the east, because it is morning, he will also beat you. You just can't give a satisfying answer.

So, where is the sun exactly? Anyone knows? Does anyone here practice Zen? Anyhow, this kind of "looking for the sun" is still not the real enlightening method with which one can see "the sun," "the moon" – not the outer sun and moon in this world. That's all I can disclose to you here, not too much.

As I have just said, there must be very good practitioners in ancient China, who at least already saw the inner sun and the inner moon, so they used the words "Ming Bai" to describe the state of enlightenment. But to see the sun or moon still belongs to the level within the Three Worlds; as to other higher worlds above this I can only tell you at initiation.

Now you have known when one is enlightened he will see the Light, have connection with the Light, get in touch with the Light. Then, did those enlightened persons of old also see the Light? Yes. This we can see from the characters they created, as I've just said. The Light we see at enlightenment is God's Light, our own Light, our own Buddha Nature, which is not the human nature, which has no form, no substance that you can grasp or touch or smell; which is absolutely pure and plain but it knows everything, contains everything, every wisdom, and creates everything.

The Light that is less subtle becomes the Sound, which

is similar to music but not to the voice of talking; which is very, very soft and can soothe, cool our mind. It can develop our wisdom. It can change our disposition. The more we are steeped in it, we will feel less suffering, more happiness in this world. We shall gradually understand the Scriptures, our own Self, then other sentient beings, then the whole universe!

When we are connected with this Light and see this Light is when we see Buddha, we see our own Buddha Nature. In reality Buddha has no form, but a Buddha may appear in this world, using the human body only as an instrument, as an agency, as a vehicle to save the sentient beings. Any sphere – even if it's the Buddha's domain – where we still can see “something,” still can see any aspect, is not yet the very Reality, but the second class manifestation of Buddha. The first class, the highest manifestation, is the Ultimate Truth, which has no form, no substance. Only when a concept arises does the form, the substance, the color, the sound start to exist.

From the human existence up to the highest state, to the Anuttara-Samyak-Sambuddha (the Most High), there still have to be the levels of Sound and Light as the ladder for us to climb step by step. Not the material sound and light of the world, but the inner Sound and Light which are so subtle and fine that the human eyes and ears cannot see or hear them. Even though they are still not the ultimate, they are necessary.

In the Surangama Sutra it is mentioned the Sound Stream, when Shakyamuni Buddha said: ***All Buddhas follow this Sound Stream to go down into this world to save sentient beings; while the beings follow this Sound Stream to go back to their original abode.*** Have you ever read it? It's a short sentence that you probably have not attended to. The

Sound Stream means the course of the Sound. Though Buddha explained so clearly, but the common people, having not the actual experience, certainly cannot understand. It's just as when I mention the name "airplane," a man who has never seen such a thing in his life cannot imagine it.

In the same Sutra it also states the practicing experiences of twenty-five Bodhisattvas (Saints), who all stated to have seen the Light – various kinds of Light – when getting enlightened. Some of them also heard different kinds of Sound such as thunder, beating of drums, the bell, sound of sea tide, heavenly being, etc. So these were their enlightening experiences: to see the Light and hear the Sound. Any conditions other than these two are all not enlightenment. For example, to leap here and there, to do all kinds of gestures, or things like that, in all Scriptures I have read there is none that says these things have anything to do with enlightenment. No, indeed.

The Christian Bible also mentions about the Light. ***When he saw God, God was like a great flame. Hiers voice was like the sound of thunder, like the sound of many waters,*** which is similar to that described in the Buddhist Sutras. And in the Hindu Scriptures they also revealed their enlightening verifications such as seeing the inner Light, hearing the inner Sound. So, actually the enlightening experiences of any religion are all the same, and to excitedly jump around or to do any kind of mudras (gestures) is by no means the real enlightenment.

I have seen all Scriptures talk about the similar experiences and I have told you all this very truthfully according to them, not to my personal verification, though it is also the same as in the Scriptures. Therefore, to synthesize that in the Scriptures and of my own experience we may conclude: When

one sees the inner Light, he sees the Buddha Nature, a part of. Within the Light there are many states, much wisdom and many other things; but enlightenment is the beginning to have contact with the Light. Therefore one must see the Light first when enlightened.

As I've mentioned, enlightenment is "Ming Bai" in Chinese characters, which involve "Light." This means, first we must have the Light, not darkness, then we can see the creation in the whole universe. We human beings are already "dark" enough. Our eyes can see and our ears can hear only up to a short distance, and no more. We do not have limitless power to see the whole universe, to hear the Supra-Worldly Sound of the very high, very beautiful world.

Before enlightenment if we heard the sound that is of very high vibration, our ears would get ruined – this the scientists have proved. Similarly if light is too strong it will break our eyes. But when we are enlightened we can accept however strong Light, however high vibratory Sound, without our ears or eyes being hurt. And all this, the real state of enlightenment, the Lotus Sutra has related so clearly.

Nevertheless, not all Light is of high level. There are many degrees of Light, like that in the Asura World, which is only the First World. One must practice more and more to reach the Second World, the Third, the Fourth and the Fifth.

We see the shadow when we stand under the lamp, the sun, or even the moon, but there is no such shadow in the state of Buddha's Light. That's why it's said, ***Buddha's Light is without any dark***, and this sentence has become a subject of study, a controversy among many Buddhist people who have no actual enlightening experience themselves. If they did,

they wouldn't have talked so much. They could even burn the Scriptures away, which are not useful really!

So, not being enlightened they can only sit there and argue about what, *Buddha's Light is without any dark* means. What, *The cup is not a cup* implies. Or harp on, *Substance is emptiness*, as if they knew what this phrase means. But if you beat them, they'll all the same get angry. And this betrays their ignorance of *Substance is emptiness*, of what the Scriptures suggest. Suffice it to listen to all their arguments to know they are unenlightened. A real enlightened person does not like to argue, because it is the most tiresome thing.

That I've come here to preach is because it is my duty as a nun. Also because my students came to my place to beg with tears, though I didn't want to at the beginning. What is there to talk about? What could I say to let you understand what I have come to understand? How to describe to people who haven't seen an elephant or airplane what it is like? Limited as the worldly language is, how much can I convey to you? That's why I don't want to speak anything. How much less to waste time on the argument, which will only happen between unenlightened people; between people of low level and cause them to get angry with each other and then end as enemies.

What is: *Buddha's Light is without any dark*? What is: *Substance is emptiness*? All this after getting enlightened we will immediately understand. No need to argue; we don't even want to talk. And the more we practice the more we will understand and the less we will talk.

So, today I am so tired and I was thinking, "How nice would it be if I could just stay on the mountain and sleep!" So I complained to my disciples. But since responding to their

sincerity I've agreed to give lectures for a week I have to keep the promise.

It's always like this. Each time I would say "yes" too quickly and then regret so much. But the next time I would forget the regretfulness and say "yes" again. "There will be no more," has been my decision after each lecture, which, however, has never been put into practice, for my disciples always came praying, "Please, please, Master..." So I would be persuaded, and afterward think: "It's still better to sleep on the mountain," again. Truly, it's so boring. What is there to talk about?

Just now I mentioned there's a variety of Light with different colors and qualities in each world. Without initiation and guidance of an enlightened Master when we see the Light we do not know of which world it is, which level we've reached. For example, to see the Light of only the First World or the Second World is just as nothing big as to hear unexpectedly the inner Sound of thunder, of the beating drum, of the ringing bell, the ocean tide, or the roar of the lion, etc., which are all mentioned in the Buddhist Sutras.

Similar things are said in the Bible, *When he saw God, God was like a great flame. Hiers voice was like the sound of thunder...* It means, according to Catholicism, there were also great Light and Sound at the time of "seeing God," which is the same as Buddhist's "seeing Buddha – Buddha Nature – when the flower is open." Both describe enlightenment. Sometimes the descriptions may not be quite the same only due to the different languages used.

If without the initiation by a real Master you happen to hear the Sound of thunder or the beating drum or the sea waves or the lion's roar, etc., that I've just mentioned, you may think,

“How great, I’m enlightened!” But the very next day you will see it’s impossible to enjoy this “enlightenment” again, because it was by accident that it came. Just as an Aulacese idiom says: “When a dog is yawning, a fly happens to bump into its mouth.” The unexpected Sound or Light makes us feel that we are enlightened, but it is not exactly so. Even if we may count it in as a kind of enlightenment, but, of only one minute or one second it is not useful, is not nourishing enough.

Take vegan milk as an example. Though having barely drunk a spoon of it, we may say we’ve tasted vegan milk and we know what it’s like. And it’s much better than those who never did, because at least we know what vegan milk is now. But is the nutrition we’ve derived from this spoon of vegan milk plenty enough? Could a baby survive, if you gave it no more than a spoon of milk as food only once in two or three days? Certainly not.

The same with enlightenment. It is the real enlightenment only if we can be “in Light” every day and will not be “in dark” again; if we can listen to the Sound any time after we hear of it. Does anyone of you here – except our fellow practitioners – have this condition? No? Then you are not enlightened yet, I’m sorry to say. To see the Light or Buddha or hear the Sound accidentally is nothing but illusion, just as people say: “A blind cat runs into a dead mouse.” The cat gets the mouse only by chance, not by effort. Before that it did not know where the mouse was at all.

The real enlightened people can “catch one mouse, two mice, three mice...” any time they want. But even this kind of enlightening experience is still not high. Such as to hear the Sounds of thunder, of sea waves, etc., only belong to the

Three Worlds, or even lower than the Third World, and still far from those higher worlds where there are other kinds of Light, Sound and other states. These details we won't know if we don't practice the right method with a competent Master, but merely read the Scriptures. For they are only the records of the past practitioners' initial experiences.

For example, when Shakyamuni Buddha gave initiation to five, six or one hundred persons or so, these people put down what they saw and heard during the initiation, which then became the Sutras (Buddhist Scriptures) we read now. Therefore the Scriptures only tell us about experiences of others, of the ancient people, and won't do positive good for us who read them. Not to speak that those experiences are still in the lower states because those students wrote them at the time of initiation, when they were just the beginners in practice with Buddha. This is so-called “immediate enlightenment” – to get enlightened immediately at the time of initiation, of the Power transmission.

To reach the higher worlds there must be a guide, a real Master who will take us there or tell us what are in those worlds, so that we can check our own levels in the future. But actually we don't have to measure to know we are in the Three Worlds or above the Three Worlds. When time comes, we shall know it right away – just as one who eats cookies knows he himself is eating it. Without any shadow of doubt we know we've attained such enlightenment. Beyond the Three Worlds our whole mentality is changed, our wisdom is developed to let us see things so manifestly with no question whatsoever. It is the state of great enlightenment, one achieving which shall never recede from practice, shall have no more delusion in

one's mind and therefore is called the never-receding Bodhisattva or the Eighth-rank Bodhisattva.

It is said, just a hearsay, that in the recent times there's a great Chinese master who at enlightenment saw someone else urinating outside the wall. Do you know what this means? It was also a sort of enlightenment. How could he see that through the wall? (*Someone replies: Because his eye was open.*) What eye was it? (*Someone replies: The devas-eye.*) But that is not enlightenment but some supernatural power.

It's like this. Besides this material body we still have a spiritual body which can know everything without any sense organs like the eyes, the ears, the nose, the mouth or whatever; with which we can leave this body and go to many places for fun. We can see what others are doing, we can look down at this material body. It's about the same as when we are dead. But this is only the disembodiment of the second body, the spiritual body. It's just the so-called "astral projection," and is but a minor enlightenment. In the state of great enlightenment we can see not only things in this world but the higher worlds, where there are Lights and Sounds of higher degrees, and many other things.

Enlightenment means to see the Light, whereas this astral projection is only the separation between the material body and the spiritual body, which literally is not the real soul but another form of the body. We have many layers of body, including this one, the material body, inside which there is the second one – more subtle – then inside the second one, the third one, which is even subtler, and then the fourth one, the fifth, and so on. The final one in the sequence, the most interior part, the one that is shut up behind so many layers of the

body, is the subtlest, which is no more a “body” but our Real Self, our True Soul.

When we leave behind this material body here, carrying all other layers of the body to go traveling, our Real Spirit, our final “body” is still hemmed by other layers of the body. And therefore, it's not that we are truly enlightened, just that we are more free to leave the physical body, and that's all. Whereas the spirit of a great enlightened person can be free perfectly from all the bodies. He can leave them whenever he wants, and that's what the real enlightenment is.

When this final body, the so-called our own Master, or our Real Face, which is at the moment closed up inside, can go a little away, a little higher than our physical body – though not completely away – we begin to see other worlds. For example, when it reaches the First Level we may see the Light of the First World, then a little further we see the Light of the Second World.

And when the Real Soul is forever liberated from the world, one can come and go as He will. He then is Ju Lai – neither coming nor going (also referred to in Sanskrit as Tathagata). His Real Self remains in a very, very high state where He dominates the body, the six sense organs and perceptions to do things in this world. He comes and goes, but then He doesn't come and go. He can see the whole creation, He knows the entire universe.

That's why these kinds of people can hear our prayers immediately. Because He is not in this small house – the body; He is at the housetop. Isn't it so, that when we look down from the mountain we can have a best view of the town, from the airplane we can see many houses – and even more, if with a

telescope? Therefore, when encountering the disaster at sea, we may wave the flag, then people on the helicopter will perceive and hurry to rope us up.

The same with the state of Ju Lai. He doesn't have to come here to know everything and He doesn't need to go somewhere to do anything. He may just put something down to pull us up. He hears and sees anything in any place because He is in a very, very high world. He "so comes, so goes." So is the state of Quan Yin Bodhisattva, who can know any prayer from any corner without actually being there to hear, going there to see. If She had merely a physical body, She would be too busy to run around answering all the prayers, which may even come from the whole world!

When one achieves the state of Ju Lai, it means His soul is liberated, His Master of the body has gone to the highest world. Just as in a factory the boss is absent, but the whole staff and the office are still there. So the boss, in another place, can call the dictate what to do. It is also the same as that the automated machine can carry on the work without the operator. This is the state of Ju Lai. Therefore, that the soul leaves the body to take a look around is not the state of Ju Lai, but only a kind of "traveling without the physical body," which is easier than with the body and is similar to the condition of the ghost.

According to an American doctor, who is specialized in the research of the just-died people, some people revived after one hour of their death, or after a couple of hours, or several days. Have you ever heard of such things? (*Some reply: Yes.*) It did happen in Formosa and Au Lac on some people; some of whom disclosed their experiences while others dared not. In America it is reported like this. Someone who died from a car

accident said when dying, he felt seemingly himself in another body, rising up to see his own body lying there, and many people rushing around, and the police coming to jot down something, and the doctor also arriving, and every other thing on the spot. All this he told the doctor as well as the police after returning to consciousness, who all wondered, “How could a dead person know all about that!?”

When the composition of other layers of bodies leaves the physical body, it can go everywhere, can pass through other human bodies or be passed through without any feeling. Here in this world it also happens that sometimes we may walk across the ghosts but we aren't aware of it at all. Many people who died and came to life again said the same thing, that when they died they felt themselves levitating and then saw their own bodies lying there or sitting there, or enduring a terrible car accident. There were also some people whose “souls” went out when they were undergoing the operations. But actually, as I have said, it is not the Real Soul that goes out. The Real Soul, the Real Self, means our wisdom that lies deepest inside our body. But to say inside our body is not truly inside. I have to say so because there's no other words more appropriate and I can't say it's “outside,” lest you should look outward. So don't think you can find it by opening the body, layer after layer, as if performing the surgical operation. Don't try it, otherwise you're only asking for trouble. (Laughter)

Some people said while they're undergoing the surgical operation, their spiritual bodies could rise and float about other sick-rooms to see what's going on with other patients, and then returned to their material bodies. They said that during the while they could see all this so clearly as if they're observ-

ing it. Such is the situation when the ordinary people die, is still of very low level.

When the great Truth practitioners pass away it's not like that. Some of them go to the Western Pure Land instantly, and others enter the state of Ju Lai, and these are the conditions that we want. We don't want the condition of ghost. Everyone, sooner or later, will die and go through the stage of ghost, except those very wicked, very malevolent, who shall go to hell as soon as they die, and therefore can't linger in this world to have a look at their own physical bodies or their families still alive.

The spirits of some people, after the physical bodies die, still hang around their houses trying to talk with and touch their dear ones, who however don't feel their existence. Therefore, they grieve, they suffer, they think, "There, there, my body looks the same as usual. Why? Am I really dead? Why?" They don't feel themselves dead, but here it is so, that the alive don't listen to them, don't know they're asking for food. Their loved ones just don't perceive whatever they do! Sometimes they use a great effort to make some noises, so that people can hear and react, "The... the... there is a ghost!" They would do anything possible, maybe banging on the door, clinking the glasses, or even hopping on our bed. These things could really happen, as they are so mad about this – for all the time they have been talking and talking, but no one has paid any attention to them! (Laughter)

They might want to embrace their wives, who however can't feel anything or even bring other men home, (Laughter) doing something in front of them, which make them even angry. So they endeavor to make some sound to let people hear that they are there, even though people still cannot see them.

Those having greater merit and power might manifest themselves into some physical bodies for a while, or a period of time, so that people will see them and be shocked and cry out, "G...g...ghost!" (Laughter) Yes. All this did happen.

Therefore let us not become the lonely ghost, to whose words no one can pay attention, be the words are good information; whose wife or husband may bring the other sex home no sooner has he or she died. What a torture it could be, having a mouth that can't talk, having a body that can't function, being unable to do anything about everything! We don't want to become like this. We want a death in which we can manage ourselves. We have the right to choose where to go instead of being put in the situation of ghost that is so helpless, so lonesome, so unattended by humankind that he cannot but go to the graveyard and talk with, stay with other ghosts. It is very unhappy, undoubtedly.

A good Truth practitioner, however, can go freely when he dies. He even knows in advance, when and where he will go. This is more like a free, Real Man, who has come freely; and will go also freely. As noble humankind, who haven't done any evil deeds, we don't like to be treated like a prisoner, being arrested and taken away by messengers of Hades. No. So we must practice. We stand on our rights that we can go freely. We shall know previously the day of our departure so as to tell the husband or wife, the children, or disciples to get prepared. Only then are we the Real Men, who can go on our own, independent of the hold of the Hades messengers, careless of whether the alive will listen to us or not.

Of what worth is the human's life, if we cannot even be our own Master in the birth and death matter? Basically

ghosts, devils are lower than us; they are our servants. But they will arrest, imprison bad men, just the same as the police do the criminal president of a nation and deprive him of his power, though he originally was the governor of the police.

Do you know what are the “three bitter planes of existence”? They are hell, hungry ghosts and animals. So the ghosts are lower than human beings, but when we die they still may come to catch, force us away, using drastic measures to punish us. Isn't it so undignified and face-losing? We must not allow this to happen.

A real, great Truth practitioner is the noblest being, who will leave this world in a way as the Buddhas do: in the company of celestial Music, of angels from Heaven, and with Buddha's warm reception. He will follow the way of never-receding Bodhisattva and thus is beyond the hands of the Hades messengers. Only the one who doesn't practice for the Truth or doesn't practice well, will fall into the grasp of the devils and be imprisoned and tormented, which indeed is not the end a man, a real gentleman is supposed to meet.

Here in this world we know how to take care of our body. We work hard in order to deposit some money for the old age. Then, for the after-life, why don't we accumulate some merit, which is much more important than the old-age pension? We might not be able to enjoy the deposit, for we might die tomorrow, before we get old. Everyone must encounter death, but not necessarily the old age. Therefore, to practice for Truth, to accumulate the merit for the day when we shall end the sojourn in this world, is right the first and foremost important thing in a human's life, so much more important than to save money for the old age!

The Supra-Worldly Light

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
April 25, 1987
Peng Hu, Formosa
(Originally in Chinese)

Today we are also going to talk about “Quan Yin,” but it is different from the one I talked about yesterday. Today we talk about the Light of the Sound. Just now we sang “The Chant of Amitabha Buddha” – Amitabha is a Sanskrit name, meaning the infinite Light. Where does this infinite Light come from? It also comes from this Sound. The Sound that is subtler becomes the Light, which is also very important to us. Yesterday I said the Sound was very important, and today I say the

Light is the same importance. This you must have heard about.

Without the lamps we cannot live. Without the sun we cannot survive – plants would not grow, our body would not get enough natural Vitamin D, and the children would not grow up, etc., etc. Even at night we need the moonlight, the lamps. In the old times they used oil-lamps, and now we use electric lights. Why is it that yesterday I talked about the Sound, and today the Light? Because They relate to each other, and to practice the Quan Yin Method of meditation is to practice the method of the Light. Since ancient times, every religion, every sect, every enlightened Master all stressed this Light and Sound in spiritual practice. Now that I have spoken on the Sound yesterday, today I should speak something on the Light in order that you may really understand.

Any great practitioner all speak about the Light. The Chinese character “Ming” for enlightenment involves the sun and the moon, which suggests Light, and that means enlightenment is in Light. How can one get enlightened if there is no Light? Therefore enlightenment involves Light – to see the Light or radiating the Light by oneself, or to get connected with the Light.

Even the light of the lamps is so important. As I said yesterday, the crying baby will immediately stop crying when it hears something ringing. Sometimes the baby cries because we turn off the light and let it sleep in the dark place, which makes it feel frightened. Once we turn on the light again, or show it some bright colored toys, seeing these colorful and bright things, it will also stop crying.

Therefore, since childhood the Light and Sound have been very important to us. Why is it so? Because the fetus

already has connection with the Light when it is still in the mother's womb. The Light nourishes it. The Light and Sound are the same thing of different quality.

For example, the ice and water, or water and the air are about the same thing because in the air there is H₂O, oxygen and hydrogen, and so is in water. But water is not the air, and the air is not water, and we need both of them. We need the air as we must breathe, we need water as we want to drink, to cook, to wash... to do many things. Therefore we need them both. They both compose of oxygen and hydrogen, but they are two different things. We cannot drink the air, nor can we breathe water. While swimming we get in touch with H₂O, but we still need to breathe oxygen in, otherwise we will be drowned to death in a very short moment.

In this world we can only live up to one hundred years, however comfortable, however leisurely the life may be. Not to speak of the fact that life has more suffering than happiness, life is nothing really so good. But many people build big and strong houses and decorate them luxuriously, as if they were to live in those houses forever. But the fact is that they cannot. They can live in there for up to one hundred years at most, no matter how wealthy and long-lived they are. What a pity! We ourselves have inside our body such a beautiful, durable “palace” with many wonderful things, but we don’t know how to enjoy it. We are always busy pursuing the outward, transitory life comforts.

The Light and Sound are so important to us. We all know that without light we cannot survive, without the sun this world would not exist. Even children love the sun, love the bright things. Therefore after the baby is born, when someone comes

to see it, the brighter the color of the person's clothes is, the more the baby likes to look at him. Is that not so? You will notice this if you have children. As a result of observation, I have found that the toys for children are all attractively bright-colored, like brilliant red or green or white, or other resplendent colors because those colors offer brightness which the children like. The adults will not give them toys of dark colors.

Why is it so? Because in the mother's womb the baby already had contact with the Light. Though eating nothing, it can grow very well because the Light and Sound nourish it. But once it comes out of the mother's womb into this world, it loses the contact with the Light. If you have read one of the Buddhist Sutras – The Womb Treasury Sutra – you will know that in the Sutra it is said that, before a fetus is born, its soul remains wandering in the state of not knowing space and time till it sees Light and heads for It. And once it enters that Light, it is born into the world.

The Light keeps taking care of the fetus in the mother's womb until it is born. While in the mother's womb the Light is extremely bright and luminous, but It won't hurt the fetus' eyes or bring any strong or sore and painful feeling to its body, skin, life. Because it is God's Light, Buddha's Light. It is the Light of Real Self, which is very, very gentle; which will not hurt us or scare us. The fetus has been accustomed to the gentle God's Light in the mother's womb.

But after the baby comes into this world, though there is also light here, but the sun, the air or any other material light all bring pain to it, to its eyes. Therefore the moment it is born its eyes cannot open because it feels hundreds of prickles on its eyes as well as the body. To its delicate skin the air on Earth

is too sore, too suffering, and that's why it cries. It cries partly because of the pain on the body, partly because of the unhappiness of losing contact with the Light. It feels not so comfortable, so happy as in the mother's womb. Therefore it cries. It feels so suffering, and will get used to the environment in this world only gradually as it grows up.

Most crying babies will be surprised, and immediately stop crying when we give them a little jingling bell, or turn on the light in the dark room. They will look, and think that it is the Light which they have lost. Or when they hear the jingles they will mistake that for the inner Sound they were familiar to. Therefore they stop for a while and listen and look, but cry again when they find all these are phony and can do no good to them, cannot comfort their souls. So the adults will find more jingling toys to make more, longer sounds to pacify them. So they stop again, but cry again after discovering that it is another trick. So they cry and stop, stop and cry, and keep like this all the time.

Sometimes without any apparent reason they will also cry, because they feel annoyed. Although they can't talk, but their feelings are most sensitive and keen, their wisdom is purest at the time they just come into this world. They can sense even the slightest uncomfortableness. After the babies are born and put in the same environment with us, as time goes by, they get used to our lifestyle; however, after growing up they still like bright and luminous things. Therefore you see women like to put colors on their faces. Is it not so? This is also due to the memory of Light while in the mothers' wombs.

That is why the fashionable garments, in general, all have rich colors. Another example is: our bodies feel more

comfortable in summer and our mood is easier in summer. Is that not so? In winter we feel annoyed, because the sky is dull and not so bright. Therefore our bodies don't feel so good, our spirit is more depressed. This is all because of the change of the degrees of light in our surroundings.

So after we grow up we continue to look for bright things, we wear clothes in rich colors. The yellow robe that I wear now is also to remind you of the Light within yourselves. This is the kind of clothes that the monks in India generally wear, which implies the bright person, the person with Light, the person who is already enlightened – at least he must have seen the inner sun. Therefore yellow represents the color of enlightenment.

Even the ordinary people, not yet enlightened, also like brilliant colors. Therefore you see those places for entertainment, like bars, restaurants are all decorated in resplendent, variegated colors. Is it not so? The more resplendent the place is, the more people are attracted to it. Even if not many people are there, the place must maintain its brightness in order to draw more people to come. Is that not so? The most sense-appealing places are all decorated with all kinds of lights, so that our eyes will be caught just as the flying moth is forever attracted by light – sometimes it flies into the flame and gets burned.

Therefore all beings are fond of light, but this kind of light still belongs to the outward, worldly level. There is the Supra-Worldly Light, which we call the Light of the spiritual practice. The spiritual practitioners, more or less, all have Light. Therefore we see Jesus Christ, Shakyamuni Buddha, Quan Yin Bodhisattva all have a halo above Their heads. This means that They had developed Their inner levels of enlight-

enment to a certain degree and could radiate Light, just as when a tree has grown very big, it can be seen even from a very far distance.

Do the common people have Light? Yes, we do, but the Light of some people is very “dark” and “black”; (Laughter) and of some others it's coffee, blue, purple, red or yellow, etc. Some great practitioners bear Light of many colors like golden, white, etc., which is not the ordinary light. If our wisdom-eyes are not open, we cannot perceive it; and if our wisdom-eyes are open only a little bit, then we can just see a part of their Light in vagueness.

Why is it that the great practitioner can have this kind of Light? It is not just an adornment to show to people. This Light is their body. Because this inner Light will radiate its Power, which can save us, protect us and comfort us when we enter into It, so the person with this Light will give others a very soothing feeling. But those with evil-mind or heavy hindrance might not be able to enjoy the Light and feel uncomfortable; to whom it's better to keep at a distance, otherwise once they draw near they feel uncomfortable.

The other day someone told me, “I can see a white Light surrounding You, but I feel that I cannot come near to You and can only look at You from far.” Once he drew near he felt uncomfortable. He said, “Maybe I would have got killed by Your Light if I had forced myself to come closer.”

And I said, “No, it's not so. You see now you sit near me and you are still alive. It is just your feeling.”

It's because some people still have some hindrance of Maya inside, some dark corner which has not been cleansed, though they have attained a certain degree in practice. And it's

just that his inner Maya does not like people of Light, not the Light does not like this man.

For example, the lawbreaker or evildoer will feel restless at the sight of the policemen and even be scared to run away. It's not the police officer does anything to him. He himself runs off even before the police officer sees him. Criminals don't like the police because they respectively stand for two different ideas, different planes, different circumstances. One is dark, and the other one is white. The police represent justice and legality, while criminals are on the side of darkness, of illegality.

That is why most of the ordinary people will feel very comfortable when they get into this gentle Light, and people with some dark corner inside or Maya hindrance may feel uncomfortable when they first get in touch with the Light. But they will also feel comfortable after getting more contact with it, because the Light will wash away their dark corners, which we call hindrance of karma, or of Maya. They will have no problem and feel comfortable after being cleansed. Whether comfortable or not lies in whether there is the Maya hindrance, the dark corner or not. It's not the Light differs or the person himself changes. His real Self has no problem; only the strange things from the outward world mix in his originally pure Self and make him like that.

For example, basically we all feel comfortable when we take baths either in cool water or hot water. But if we were wounded or burnt, having our skin rupturing and flesh bursting, then would we still feel comfortable when we have baths? Of course not. Is it not so? I hope you haven't got this kind of bitter experience. But you can imagine the situation. It's not water itself which makes us uncomfortable, it's the wound which

does. When the wounded part is recovered, then we shall have no more trouble in bathing. Therefore the uncomfortableness is due to the change of the wounded skin, not of water itself.

The same with a person who is possessed or has the dark corner inside. He will feel uncomfortable when he just begins to come close to a great practitioner, but later on as the contact increases he will like it and no more feel unbearable. Therefore a practitioner in reality does not need the protection of the police because as long as he is not willing, no one can enter into his natural “protecting wall,” which protects him from the intruders. It's not that the Light will push away the intruder, just that he himself will be naturally shoved off, because the dark things cannot stand together with light. Where light exists, darkness disappears; when it is daytime, the night cannot appear.

For example, in the South Pole or North Pole darkness remains for up to a half of the whole year. But once the sun shows up, even just for one time, that one time is good enough to light all places around no matter how long darkness has remained there. Be it of hundreds, of thousands of years, once the sun appears, darkness all disappears – all dispersed by the light of the sun; because the two different qualities cannot mix with each other.

Similarly, the practitioner represents the Light of the pure side in the universe, while non-practitioner or one with heavy karmic hindrance is on the dark side. Karmic hindrance means the influence of the bad leftover impression from the past. Just as the daytime and nighttime are two separate parts of a day, one with heavy karmic hindrance certainly cannot mingle with the bright side. Therefore a practitioner does not necessarily need protection of the police.

Now, some of you might raise a doubt in your mind: if it is so, then why was Jesus still crucified? Do you know why? Because He was willing to. He had known that on that particular day He Himself would be killed. But in order to shoulder the karmic hindrance of His disciples, He had to sacrifice His own body, so that the disciples' karmic hindrance could be eliminated. Otherwise His disciples would get in trouble, failing practice, and not being able to get liberation. But His power worked only when He was still in this world. Now it does not much good even though we still believe in Him – at least not as much as when He was alive.

Because a living Master is different from the past Masters just as the living doctors are different than the past doctors. Hua Tuo and Bien Chueh, whom we respect as “the magic doctors,” certainly were the two doctors most famous in the past, but they have left this world. They cannot appear now to cure our diseases however much we respect them, worship them. To cure our present diseases we must go to the present doctors.

Similarly, we respect the past great Masters but we can't talk with Them, can't learn any method of practice from Them. That's why a living Master is most important. Jesus Christ, Shakyamuni Buddha, Lao Tzu were the most famous, greatest Masters. However, there were many more who attained the same level as They did, but were unknown to the world because They were not famous.

For example, some doctors suddenly became famous because certain particular cases of their patients were reported to the public. But there are many other doctors who are also very good, also the Bachelor of Medicine, also very skillful, but are not famous. Therefore people do not know them. Another

example is: in this world there are a lot of wealthy people, of billionaires, but how many more do we know besides Rockefeller, Onassis? Many people are even richer than they are, but are not so famous. Maybe because there is no particular reason for them to get famous, maybe they don't like to get famous, or maybe because they are not dealing with special products internationally.

Shakyamuni Buddha became famous because after He was gone, many people of great influence worshipped Him, and by their influences spread His doctrine far and wide and made it an internationally renowned religion.

Jesus Christ is also very famous, because the way He died was the bitterest way in the world. And after He was dead His disciples also went everywhere to spread His teachings, which slowly made Him become very famous, as He was the first one in history to have died so excruciatingly in order to shoulder the sins of other people. And after He died He manifested Himself to His disciples as well as many others, therefore He became more and more famous. Other enlightened Masters, though also of very high levels in practice, were not so well-known to the public because they did not die so tragically.

Although these great Masters of all times were not so famous as Shakyamuni Buddha and Jesus Christ, life after life, there has been this kind of Master descending into this world to teach sentient beings. Without them, this world would have long been destroyed, because we have not had good virtues, we have created more bad karma than good, and that makes the negative force and positive force not able to keep balance. When negativity and positivity are not in balance, the world cannot exist; it will become hell.

What is hell? It means a place where there is no virtue, where only the evil souls live and punishments, sufferings exist. And what is Heaven? Heaven is a place where there is much more happiness than bitterness. Only the Kingdom of God is the best place, where there is only bliss, and no suffering at all.

As to our world, it has happiness and sorrow, therefore it has negativity and positivity. Negativity means the side of darkness and suffering, and positivity represents the bright and virtuous side. A great practitioner belongs to the positive side because he has virtues, Light and power which can save the sentient beings; can make the good and evil forces in the world become more balanced. He and his disciples practice strictly to bring more Light into the world, so that the evil deeds of the living beings will not increasingly darken the world and turn it into hell. Life after life, Shakyamuni Buddha, Jesus Christ and Lao Tzu had been great Masters, representing the quality of Light to balance the good and evil atmosphere in this world.

Therefore Light is very important to us. We can see the beings in Heaven and the angels all have Light, while the devils are black without Light because they represent darkness. And Buddha, angels represent Light. In this world there is light and darkness just as there is daytime and nighttime. In the Kingdom of God there is only Light, and in hell, only darkness. If we know how to go to hell to have a look, we will see that there is no Light at all, only darkness every day. Since our world is a mixture of brightness and darkness, therefore there is happiness and sorrow, light and blackness. Some people don't like blackness of the night and wish that every day there were only light. To achieve this they have to practice the

Quan Yin Method.

There is the Light in the Quan Yin Method, not only the Sound (the Sound is also a kind of the Light). We still have to meditate on the Light because it will show us the way. We cannot go up just hearing the Sound and following the Sound because in darkness we cannot see the road. Therefore there is also the Light in our Quan Yin Method.

We have heard that at the moment when one gets enlightened, he will see a lot of Light, a vast of Light. Is that not so? At that time he feels that his whole body disappears and only a vast of Light exists. That moment may last five minutes, ten minutes or even the whole day. Although he still lives in this world, it is just as in the Kingdom of God. To him, even the night is very bright. When this kind of Light emits, people outside the house can also see it because the whole house will become so bright, so shiny, that he can also see things in the dark without using any lamp. Only spiritual practitioners can achieve this state. This Light is different from that light of our ordinary bulbs.

For example, now I am sitting here; suppose that I have the Light and your wisdom-eyes are open, then you will see the Light of me. There are many electric lights here in the lecture hall, but the light of them is inferior to Buddha's Light. Therefore even with these electric lights here, we still can see the Light. Because Buddha's Light is not the same as material light.

Why is it that we should look for this Buddha's Light? Can't we do without practice, without looking for this Light? Yes, you can; if only you like this world, you like that there is both white and black, daytime and nighttime, then you can stay and need not practice. But if you like the Supra-Worldly Light; the Light that belongs to the most original and won-

derful; the Light that can bestow us great benefit; can liberate us; can make us become the greatest, the wisest beings in the whole universe, then you have to practice the Quan Yin Method, which has this greatest Light, and go up to find the place of this greatest Light yourself.

How to find that place? You should first find an enlightened Master. What does enlightened mean? It means he or she is already in this Light, he or she understands everything, he or she has already this Light and can convey to us some of it. Otherwise how do we know if he is the enlightened Master? Anyone can claim that he is an enlightened Master, but in fact he himself does not understand everything.

Therefore if a master claims that he himself is an enlightened Master or Shih Fu (Chinese, meaning the Master and father), then he should give us a little bit of what he has. How can we believe he is the rich man if we don't see his money? It's not that we desire all of his possessions, because we know they only belong to him; it's just that we wish to be imparted some money from him so that we can open our own stores. If he says he can give us the money but he doesn't, then how can we be sure that he is the rich man or not? Even if he is indeed a rich person, but if he doesn't help us when we are at the poorest moment and starving, and even asks for our money instead, then whether he is or not a rich man means nothing to us. A real rich man will undoubtedly be able to give us his helping hand.

The same with an enlightened Master. If he says that he can help us get enlightenment, but we don't have any Light, don't see any Light or hear any Buddha's Sound at all, then how can we know if we ourselves are enlightened or not?

What is the proof? There is nothing changed from before. If we ask him, “What is enlightenment?” he will answer, “You have to continue the practice and you will know it only after ten years.” But in case we would die after five years, or even tomorrow, then we would not be in time to attain enlightenment, to find this Light to quench our thirst for enlightenment. What can we do then? It's only a waste of time this way. Very probably we would be going to hell without anyone to help us.

Therefore a real enlightened Master must have this Light, of which he can show us a little as an immediate proof when he gives us the initiation to help us get enlightened. At least he will let us see some Light and hear some inner Sound. Initiation is to help us get some enlightenment first, and after that we must practice diligently every day in order to develop, more and more, this enlightenment till one day we will become perfectly enlightened. After initiation we must practice every day, so that the experience of enlightenment will carry on, will happen every day because it has come into our possession. This Light and Sound are the Quan Yin Method, which only a real enlightened Master can help us to experience.

Originally we have the Light and the inner Sound, which are our “Real Nature,” or “Buddha Nature” as said in Buddhism. Jesus Christ said: *The Kingdom of God is within you*; Shakyamuni Buddha said: *The Buddha is in your mind*; and Lao Tzu taught the similar thing. He did not tell us to look outward for the Tao, and nor did He say that we should make our pilgrimages to the mountains, to the rivers in order to find this Tao. Is it not so? The main point of the Tao Te Ching (The Virtue Sutra) also implies that we should look for the Tao within our own selves.

Then why do we still look outward, when all past great Masters all emphasized like that? Why do we all go to the temples, the churches to search? Why do we not “listen inwardly to our own Nature” to see where our own Buddha Nature is? To see our inner Buddha Nature does not mean using the knife to open our body, but using the “key” to open it. The real enlightened Master has the “key.” He is not the real enlightened Master if he cannot open it for us; he is not an enlightened person if he cannot give us some experience of enlightenment.

Quan Yin Method should have the Light to guide us the way, to let us know how to go on; because there are so many realms, how can we see clearly without the Light? Without the Light how can we do it when we want to see our inner realms, to see our inner treasures? Even here in this world we can see nothing without light, not to mention the higher worlds. We will not be able to see without the guidance of the Light. That's why the Light is so important.

For the good of later generations the Truth practitioners of old wrote down their experiences of enlightenment, from which we see that, more or less, there was always the Light during their enlightenment. It might be little in the beginning, but it became big after they attained great enlightenment. This Light will radiate and be seen by other people. That's why we see the Light from Shakyamuni Buddha, from Jesus Christ.

But sometimes we can also see Light or suddenly hear some Sound even if we have not got initiation from an enlightened Master, have not been practicing, have not been meditating. But either the Light or the inner Sound we can hear or see only for an instant, not continuously, because we do not have initiation from an enlightened Master.

Yesterday I said that there are two kinds of sound. One of which is negative, representing the sound within the Three Worlds, and the other one belongs to the realms above the Three Worlds – the liberating Sound. Listening to the Sound within the Three Worlds will make us transmigrate again, while the Sound above the Three Worlds will lead us toward liberation. But without the guidance of the enlightened Master we are not able to understand and discern between the real Sound – the perfect one enabling us to get liberation – and the false one, which is imperfect, not able to liberate us. The Light also has two kinds: one liberating us and the other one making us forever in the circle of transmigration.

Therefore it is not every Sound you hear or every Light you see will grant you the liberation. That is why we need the guidance of an enlightened Master. He knows both the negative and positive Light and Sound, so He can teach us how to discriminate right from false. Otherwise what is the point to look for an enlightened Master, since we can also meditate by ourselves? Do not think that it is enough just meditating by yourselves or reciting the Buddha's name. Of course this is better than doing nothing, but it is not the best way, not the way to help us attain great enlightenment.

Therefore, since ancient time till now, before getting enlightened the great practitioners all traveled uphill and down dale in order to find the enlightened Master. What is the need to find the enlightened Master if it was good enough for them to practice by themselves? Jesus Christ was said to be born a Saint, the son of God, then why was it that He still went to India to follow many great Masters and practice for over ten years? It is said that Shakyamuni Buddha could walk seven

steps right after He was born into this world, and following each of these steps there was one lotus, totaling seven lotuses under His feet, because He was the reincarnation of a Bodhisattva. Be it so, He still had to seek for the enlightened Master to learn and thereafter arduously practiced for six years before He attained the ultimate enlightenment.

The sixth Patriarch of Buddhist Ch'an sect, Hui Neng got enlightened immediately when He heard someone else reciting the Diamond Sutra, though He was then just an illiterate woodcutter. But why did He still go to ask the fifth Patriarch, Hung Jen, for initiation, and afterward sequester Himself from the world to practice for sixteen years before He got the complete enlightenment, before He could initiate others? And Jesus Christ followed many great Masters in the Himalayas to practice in order to understand many truths. Shakyamuni Buddha had six teachers, who all were already dead when He achieved Buddhahood, though He was going to preach the Truth to them as a return for their benefits to Him. Therefore we should not think that Shakyamuni Buddha had no teacher. He had six teachers. Anyone who is the reincarnation of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, all has to find the enlightened Master in order to attain complete achievement in practice.

So there are two kinds of Light. The first class Light belongs to God's or the Buddha's level and can liberate us. The second class Light will only make us transmigrate endlessly in the birth and death circle. If we meditate and practice without the proper guidance of a real enlightened Master, sometimes suddenly we will hear that inner Sound or accidentally see Light and also get a little wisdom. But without an enlightened Master's guidance, the Light we see or the Sound we hear

definitely only belongs to the second class. If we do not know this, we will think it is very good and turn out to be bound in the lower worlds by the second class Light or Sound, not being able to experience the highest level; not being able to attain real great wisdom. We will only get the small wisdom, which is only second class; only the wisdom within the Three Worlds, the wisdom belonging to the six paths of transmigration.

What are the six paths of transmigration? They are the devas, human beings, Asuras, hungry ghosts, hell and animals. Therefore just seeing the second class Light or hearing the second class Sound we will not attain the Truth.

Many people asked me that, being meat-eaters they could also see the spiritual Light, so for what reason had I insisted that people must take vegan diet? The answer is very simple. The reason is as I've mentioned just now. Meat-eaters can also see the second class Light, but they will not find the Truth; they will just run around within the six paths. But of course they can understand more than the ordinary people do because they have practiced.

For example, if this cup were dirty and no one washed it, then whatever things I put into it would do no good to me. If I still drank it, then surely I would get sick because since the cup is not clean, no matter what you put into it will all become like poison. The milk poured into it will turn sour and bitter; wine will taste bad; and even water will become with unpleasant smell. Because the cup is not clean, be that the water is very clean, wine is very pure, or the milk is aromatic, we will not get any benefit but a stomach of harmful things.

In the same way, a practitioner who has not purified his body, speech and mind will be troubled by the level or

achievement he has reached, no matter how high it is. It's just as the unclean cup will dirty the water in it. It is we who turn light into dark, and it is also we who can attain the bright Light if we can keep a purified practice.

The body, speech and mind are all very important. We cannot just cultivate the speech. It is not enough just not speaking ill of others throughout the day, because we still should speak virtuous things. Just as besides avoiding the poisonous things we still have to eat nourishments. Nor can we merely cultivate the mind. In addition to keep our mind from thinking any evil things we should also do good things.

Putting the filthy things, such as other living beings' meat, into our mouths is also not permitted. Whatsoever we eat will all affect our mind. You see the piggy has piggy's food, cattle feed on grass, horses take their fodder, chickens eat their forages, and we human beings should hold to the food originally intended for human beings, namely the plants. In the Bible it is said that *God made so many herbs and fruits for us and these should be our food.*

In all Buddhist Sutras Shakyamuni Buddha emphasized that we should not kill, should not eat living beings' meat. He said, *Those practitioners who eat meat will not become Buddhas, will not become Bodhisattvas because meat-eaters have no compassionate mind. Eating meat cuts our seeds of compassion. Therefore the highest of them can only achieve the fruition of king of Maya (Satan) at the most, the second the male subjects of Maya, and the lowest the female subjects of Maya.* He said this very clearly.

Therefore I will advice anyone who cultivates with any method to be a vegan, so that at least there is still some hope

for him to have the chance in the future to reach higher worlds. It is not necessary that you should follow me to practice Quan Yin Method or believe in me, but whatever method you practice you all have to purify your body, speech and mind in order that the bad influences can be washed.

For example, sometimes when we take some medicine, the doctor will tell us, “After taking this medicine do not drink coffee, because when mixed with coffee it will cause side-effects which will bring bad influences on your condition.” It is just as at times after we take some pills for the headache, we turn out to have trouble with the stomach or other parts of the body. If we want to practice we should first purify our body, speech and mind.

Every day we wash our bodies to keep ourselves clean outside, and similarly must we do to our inside. People forgot that human beings originally were supposed to eat vegetables, and they have been used to eating meat, so now inversely it becomes very difficult for them to go back to vegan diet. If we do not want to hold the pig, chicken, duck, cattle or the sheep in our arms, why do we put their carcasses into our mouths? It doesn't make sense.

Just now I said that meat-eaters could also see Light or hear the Sound. Indeed it is so. But it is not the Light and Sound which belong to the high realm, which can truly liberate us.

When Shakyamuni Buddha was in this world, His monk disciples certainly all took vegetarian diet. Since ancient times till now the majority of Hindu people have all been vegetarian, and that's why we see so many great Masters all came from India or were related to India. Shakyamuni Buddha's lay dis-

ciples were also Bodhisattvas, therefore a great proportion of the twenty-five Bodhisattvas in the Surangama Sutra were His lay disciples.

Why do we call them Bodhisattvas? Because they had all received the “Buddha vow,” according to which eating meat is not permitted. Because they had received the Buddha vow, therefore Shakyamuni Buddha transmitted to them the highest method. Otherwise they would only be the ordinary lay people. After the vow the lay Bodhisattvas might no longer eat meat, and therefore they could attain very high levels. From their inner visions they stated in the Surangama Sutra we can see that they had already very high levels even though it was just their beginning of practice. This was all because they didn't take meat. And of course it was even not tolerated for the Buddha's monk disciples to eat meat.

We all know that all Scriptures say that the monks should not eat meat. So it should be. But nowadays Buddhists in only few countries like Au Lac, Formosa and Mainland China or so, abide by vegetarianism. As to countries like Korea, the proportion of vegetarian monks to meat-eating monks is about half to half. And in Japan it is even worse – seemingly eighty percent of monks there eat meat.

Therefore when we look at whatever practitioners, we cannot just see whether he practices elaborately. We must also look into his ethical life because without the disciplines there will not be the real tranquil mind, and without the real tranquil mind there will be no real wisdom. That's why the disciplines, the commandments are so important.

What are the commandments? Be the good human being, be conformable to the Law of the universe. Since we don't

want to be killed, then do not kill other animals. Since we are not willing to be eaten, then don't eat other living beings' meat. All living beings have lives. They are also avaricious of life and fearful of death. When we kill them, they will be greatly frightened and suffer very much, which will produce some poisonous elements of hatred.

But the consciousness of plants has not developed to the degree of desiring life and fearing of death, therefore when we eat them there will not be great retribution. There will be some, of course, because killing anything all has its retribution, but as the plants do not have the “mind” to have revenge, we will not be pulled down by their hatred. As long as we can practice Quan Yin Method, the more the better, at least for two and a half hours every day, the little hindrance of karma will be washed off very quickly. But the karmic hindrance from eating animal's meat cannot be so easily washed, because they have thought, they will take revenge on us, not letting us go. This is why the meat-eating practitioners cannot reach the high worlds.

“Liberation” means never coming back again. If we eat living beings' meat on the one hand and intend not to come back on the other hand, then who is to settle “the debt of eating meat”? It will be against the Law of Cause and Effect if with eating meat we can still get liberated. The Law of the universe is: where there is a cause, there will be an effect. Eat meat and then you should pay back with meat. Therefore the meat-eaters cannot attain a high level in practice.

I have told you all this according to the Scriptures. It's not that I mean to criticize you. Since I preach the Truth, then I have to speak the truth. I have to tell you what I know. Were

it just talking to make you happy, then I would not need to talk more; would not need to be a nun, to deliver any preaching. All I need to do would just be telling you every day that you are so beautiful, your clothes are so fashionable. I would welcome you to do anything, to enjoy the world – so long as you take devotion in me, it is all right for you to eat meat and drink alcohol. Then people would be pleased and I wouldn't have to give any lecture. But if you tell the meat-eater that it doesn't matter to eat more meat because it will do good to his health, later he will very probably have to report his arrival at the hospital.

Many meat-eaters all meet cancers, while vegans don't have this problem. The incurable disease of the twentieth century, the AIDS, also happens only on meat-eaters and absolutely not on vegans.

Therefore you should know that if I only want to please you, then I don't have to talk these reasons; don't have to tell you, over and over, that you should take a vegan diet. Because taking vegan diet is just opposite to your present living habit, some people do not like to hear of it. But as a practitioner I have to tell the truth; to speak the frank words for those who are wise enough. Confucius also said that the gentlemen must be as straight as bamboo. Therefore whenever I think of anything beneficial to others, I should speak it out no matter if others will like it or not.

Confucius also said: ***Do not do unto others what you don't want to be done.*** You all know this saying very well and often like to quote it, don't you? What makes you like this phrase? Because the Truth exists in our own original nature; good reasons are what we long for. The noble speeches and ideas already lie dormant within us. Human beings are the no-

blest beings. Maybe all of a sudden it's impossible for you to take a vegan diet because of personal inconvenience, because your husband or wife hinders the way, or maybe because of your work. Nevertheless you still like to hear virtuous things, still like to hear the Truth because, I am sure, within you there is the noblest thing. And that is your Buddha Nature. With this Buddha Nature, or "Heaven inside," how can we not like Truth? How can we not like noble ideas? Is that not so? (*Some in the audience reply: Yes!*)

Sometimes we don't know about Truth because we have never heard others speak about it. It's not that we ourselves don't want to do it. The Law of Cause and Effect is exact and strict, without any slightest mistake. A cause will precisely be followed by an effect. It's like what people say, "The net of Heaven may be large, but nothing escapes."

Long time ago in India there was a great practitioner called Kabir. One day a man came to call on him but he was not home. His fellow practitioner (formerly his wife, but now his fellow practitioner because she became his disciple) told this man, "Go to the graveyard to find him. He is now burying one of his friends."

The man answered, "But how can I find him, since I have never seen him before?" The Hindu people all looked about the same and dress about the same, just as the monks in Formosa wear the similar clothes.

Kabir's wife said, "There if you see a man with Light above his head, that man is Kabir."

When the man arrived at the graveyard some people were digging a pit, some were carrying the coffin, and others were preparing for the burial. Each of them had Light above

his head. He did not know which one was Kabir, and because they all kept silent during the burial, he dared not ask. Therefore, he went back to Kabir's wife, saying, "I could not find Kabir, because I saw everyone present all had Light. What can I do now?"

Kabir's wife said, "It's OK. Go back to the graveyard; wait till they finish the burial and leave. Then there will be only one person with Light and that one is Kabir."

That man went back to the graveyard. When they were leaving, indeed he saw there was one person with Light above his head.

Do you know why? Why is it that during the burial all of them had Light and afterward only the great Master had? Because while burying the dead, all of them had very holy thinking in their minds. All they thought of was, "Why must people be born and die?" At that while they were so intently thinking of liberation, that their inner quality of Light radiated and was seen by that man. They realized that the circle of birth and death was the most terrible thing; they understood that life in this world was transitory, and then they did not feel much attachment to this world but the keenest desire for practice to get liberation. That's why their inner bright quality showed up and others saw their Light.

Everyone has this kind of Light. It's just that after the burial they simply forgot the question of birth and death, because the ordinary people who don't practice every day cannot control their minds so easily, cannot have their thoughts follow their will. Sometimes we want to think of the north but the mind goes to the south; we want the west but it goes to the east. Our brains are always running all over places. Therefore

after the burial, as they saw no more the coffin and the corpse, their minds lost the point to concentrate on and their thoughts all went wild. Then they no longer thought of birth and death, they only thought of their husbands, wives, the meals, the sleep, the enjoyments and all the worldly things. Therefore the Light disappeared.

We surely have Light, if we can bend our minds on the matter about birth and death and transmigration. You may try after you go home. Those people lost the Light because after the burial they only thought of the worldly things.

This world is a dark place of low level. When you are angry, you are in darkness and degraded into the hell's level. And when you think of the worldly things, it's also dark on the one hand and black on the other. There is Light only when you think of things about practice.

Kabir had long been practicing, that he could any time keep his mind on practice, on the high ideal, and that's why he had Light all the time. We are bright if we have noble ideals, we are only the common people if we think of mundane things; and we become devils when we have greed, lust, anger, attachment and ignorance in our mind, and so on.

Just now I mentioned that the Law of Cause and Effect is exact and absolute. It makes no mistake. When my Master's Master was in this world, he had a disciple who was very hard practicing Quan Yin Method. One day he went out to play and saw an earthworm suffering from the bites by a cluster of ants on its body, almost dying and not able to run off. Out of compassion he took the earthworm, putting it at a safe place and drove the ants away.

In that evening when he was meditating he saw a large

swarm of subtle spiritual bodies, not the rough physical bodies, of ants coming to bite him, which frightened him so much. They were biting and complaining in the ant's language. When we reach a high level in practice we can understand the animals' language. The ants said, "The earthworm was receiving its own retribution. It should settle it by itself. Why did you interfere in our business? This is the reward we deserve. That earthworm must pay with life the karmic hindrance it created in the past."

Therefore there are cause and effect in whatever we do. We must shoulder other person's karmic hindrance if we want to save him. But if you have a great blessed reward, it will not be so serious to take upon yourself other's karmic hindrance despite that there will still be some pains, some illness, some uncomfortableness, etc., on yourself. The worst condition is like Jesus, who was crucified as the bitterest way to settle the hindrance of karma for the sentient beings. Or it's like Shakyamuni Buddha, who encountered many, many troubles such as people throwing stones at Him, slandering Him, trying to kill Him, attempting to falsely accuse Him, etc.

Why is it that after one became a Buddha, having such a great Power, one still met with all the false accusations, the slandering and the danger of being killed? Because He had accepted many disciples – giving them initiation – undertaking their karmic hindrance, so as to convert them from the ordinary people into the saintly beings. Therefore the Master must pay off his disciples' karmic hindrances.

Therefore when we perform the Buddhist six ways to perfection: charity, keeping precepts, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom, we should do it carefully. We should

first understand the real situation before we do it. Otherwise we will get ourselves into many troubles. There are so many things mentioned in the Diamond Sutra, which might be impossible for us to do because as the ordinary beings we have no power. You see, just saving the life of an earthworm was enough to cause such a terrible condition. What will result from the karmic hindrance we created ourselves?

Time for questions. Do you have any questions? I think my biggest question is: Why do you not want to practice? Why are there so many people who aren't interested in practicing? This world is impermanent and life is transitory – up to only one hundred years at the longest. Many people complain that life is bitter, meaningless, with nothing else except eating, working and sleeping, which revolve around day after day. But the majority of people are still attached to this earthly life, unwilling to leave this world and let go of their hold on the Earth. Why can't the sentient beings see through it? This is right my biggest question.

What Happens in Dying?

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
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Today I'd like to talk about the most frightening but unavoidable thing: death. Amongst birth, aging, sickness and death, the one we are most frightened of is the last one. Isn't it? We are frightened, but it is unavoidable. What I'm going to talk today is about what happens in dying for most people.

We've heard that our bodies consist of five primary elements – metal, wood, water, fire, earth – and soul. In Buddhism the soul is known as Essence, the Original Face or Bud-

dha Nature. Now we need not care about these terms. I label it “soul” and you will understand it easier.

We've heard that when we are dying, the souls will go out, to depart from the physical bodies of the five elements. Further, the five physical elements will separate from each other, not combining together; because when a soul is present, it is like a thing sticking the five elements together. The situation is like this rosary: inside there is a piece of string which joins together the beads. If I take this piece of string away, the beads will fall on the ground. The same with our deaths. But we are not the rosary, for we have feelings.

When we are dying, we suffer very, very much. Why? Firstly, we are unwilling to leave this world, unwilling to leave our relatives, friends, husbands, wives, children, fathers and mothers, etc. Secondly, because not knowing where we will go after leaving this world, we are frightened. We never know about other worlds except this one. Thirdly, because we have not prepared ourselves, we do not know what to do when we die. Otherwise the time of dying is very happy, with nothing to be afraid of.

Truly, dying is the happiest moment. If I could pass away tomorrow I would be most delighted. But now I cannot leave because you stick me here, and I still have some responsibilities – until fulfilling which I cannot leave this world. Even if I left today, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas would push me down into this world again.

Have you ever heard that when the great monk Guang Chin entered into deep meditation, he went to high spiritual states and learned from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and did not want to come back, because he was so happy there? Those states are very good, very beautiful, very serene and free. Who

wants to come back to this small, dark prison (the body)? No one. If our souls can go out from the bodies to high realms to learn, we will dislike to come back to this “small, dark prison.” Nor did the great monk Guang Chin. But Buddhas and Bodhisattvas told him that he had to come into this world once again to deliver sentient beings before he could stay in the high states. The cases of many enlightened Masters are like his.

One day my Master's Master sat in a chair, looking very annoyed and sad. His great disciple asked him, “Master, I've never seen you so sad. Why are you so vexed today?” The Master did not answer; so he was asked again, but still he did not reply. When asked the third time, he said, “Of course I am sad. Who wants to come back and live here? Who wants to come back to this physical body, which indeed is an unhappy thing?”

Similarly, if we have already trained ourselves ordinarily, then the time of waiting to leave this world is like that of waiting our mothers to come back from the market shopping, bringing candies and cookies to us. It is also the same with practitioners of high levels. There's nothing to be frightened of. But the majority of people do not train themselves when they are living; they do not know, and no one teaches them what to do. Therefore they feel the agony when they die.

Many people teach us many things in this world. Our parents teach us how to eat, how to walk. Teachers teach us how to write English, Chinese, and many other things. Doctors, nurses, midwives, teach the future mothers how to give birth, for example; how to care for themselves and how to look after the fetus so that birth-giving will be easier and not so painful. But no one teaches us what to do when we are dying – it is ignored.

Concerning birth, aging, sickness and death: some people teach us how to give birth, some care for us when we are old – old-age pensions and insurance, etc. are prepared – doctors treat our sickness, the medical people teach us how to avoid or reduce the chance of getting illnesses. However, death alone is missed. It is not good this way. Therefore, tomorrow I will teach you how to “die” (meaning initiation). Today let's first talk about what happens in dying.

When most of people die they are unwilling to leave the world. They are attached to their fathers, mothers, husbands or wives. Why? Because in the whole life they've been living with them and every day think of them. That's why when they are leaving the world, only these intimate persons are in their minds because the love has not been exhausted. For example, they are unwilling to leave their wives, thinking, “She is so young. Who will care for her? My children are so small. How can I leave them just like this?” Worries occupy their minds. And when we are worried we put the most important expectations on our sons or wives or husbands, then because of this binding mental power we will transmigrate again.

When we are born again we may not be their husbands or wives, or their fathers, but possibly become their dogs – dogs can also be near to them – and this is where the trouble is. Of course it's alright if we can come again and become their fathers or husbands or wives. If so, everyone is welcome to come back!

But our wishes are impossible to be fulfilled all the time. Why? Because of the Law of Karma. For example, if we planted orange seeds we reap oranges; if apple seeds, then apples. If we've done nothing good but created bad deeds in this life,

then we will, of course, receive bad retribution when we are born again. So, if our qualities, characters, and modes of living are like dogs, we are unworthy to be born as human beings again. We should be born again as dogs. It's not that God punishes us but it is we ourselves who pave the road and make the situation. Just as one reaps apples if he cultivated apple trees, the cause of dogs lead to the effect of being dogs, and the cause of human being results in the effect of being the human.

What is the cause of human being? A human must possess the qualities of giving charity, keeping precepts, enduring, practicing diligently and meditating. The Five Precepts human must keep are: not killing, not stealing, not drinking alcohol, not committing adultery and not telling the lie. Not killing includes not eating animal flesh because although we do not kill by ourselves, others kill the animals for us to eat; they kill because of us and that is indirect killing and will influence us. If we cannot keep these Five Precepts, we cannot be born as human beings again.

Therefore, all religious Scriptures emphasize that we should not think of this world so much, we should not cling to this world. Why? Because if we think of this world we will come into this world again. If we think of God, then we will go to Heaven. If we think of Buddha, then we will go to Buddha's Land. All religions teach us this matter. But it is not easy to think of Buddhas and God.

Do you want to die immediately? To get initiation means to learn how to die. So if you are frightened, don't have it. During initiation I will teach you how to "die." I do not teach you anything else; I only tell you what it looks like in dying. When you become initiated, your condition is the same as dy-

ing, only it's not the real dying. It is happy dying, not painful dying. If you are frightened of death, don't come to have initiation, which is just as ordinary as I am talking now, nothing frightening but fun.

After one's death, he who does not have enough blessed rewards will be reborn as the animal or lonely ghost, hungry ghost – the ghosts to whom people light firecrackers; offer chickens, cows, pigs, fruits, etc., and burn joss sticks in lunar July. If no people feed them, they will starve. Human beings without enough blessed rewards will become that kind of hungry ghost or other kinds of ghosts after death.

Those who have heavy karmic hindrances will fall into hells after death. What is karmic hindrance? It means bad deeds, such as wicked acts, killing, committing adultery, cheating, etc. I do not mean to terrify you, but just tell you what the Sutras say. There are really hells, which are created by sentient beings' bad karma.

I have just said that by growing orange trees we will reap oranges. Good receives good, bad receives bad. Hells are made because we commit bad deeds. If Heaven exists, hell exists. Believing in hell you should believe in Heaven. Believing in ghosts you should believe in Buddha. To those having no blessed rewards, we need not talk much about this, but I hope you all have. Formosan people seem to have great blessed rewards. Many people are rich, but what will happen after they die? No one talks about this matter.

Many fortune-tellers may tell you, “Your physiognomy is good. After two years you will become wealthy, you will graduate, you will become a boss...,” but no one can predict where you will go after death. No one speaks of the thing we

most like to listen. No one teaches us the thing we like most to know. Is that not so? They just teach all the topsy-turvy.

For example, concerning giving birth: births are being given without teaching. No one teaches animals to give birth, but they are propagating. If not because human beings eat them in a large scale, without compassion, they would have even more offspring. Is that not so? Animals have not been taught to give birth but they can. Therefore there is no need to teach giving birth.

How about aging? We will be old naturally. After several decades we will be old even we do nothing. Old-age pensions and insurances cannot guarantee our safety. Some people deposit old-age pensions but they could not live that long to enjoy it. Is it not so?

Concerning illness: there are plenty of doctors but still it is unsafe because nowadays there are many such diseases which doctors cannot cure as AIDS, cancers. Is that not so? People have a lot of money, many hospitals and all kinds of medicines, but illness still exists, and even worse than before. There are many diseases which we've never heard before. Why? It is because we have continued to cause many, many karmic hindrances.

People living on Earth seem to become more and more indifferent to nature. We forget morals, forget a life corresponding to the Truth, forget a life conformable with the Law of Nature. We forget all this. We casually avail ourselves of natural resources, of the earth, of the sky. We recklessly exploit trees, without first inspecting the geographical environment. We destroy many natural environments, that we cannot even enjoy climbing mountains as we formerly did.

In many places they cut down trees beside the roads, leaving the soil without protection. No roots to hold the soil, nor trunks to fence the earth, that the soil can be easily drifted away. And this is only one of the many examples. They cut from the trees to animals, to humans, to the whole city, to the entire nation. Hiroshima city in Japan was almost leveled in the dust in the Second World War.

As though we do not feel satisfied just by cutting trees, we kill animals, then we kill human beings. Therefore our moral order degrades largely. Because we create this kind of atmosphere, these kinds of causes, we've turned the Earth into a very horrible place, despite it originally should be a nice land, because if we are the noblest beings, the Earth we live on should be the best. Is it not so? But as we do not recognize our own position, we pull down ourselves. It's truly a pity.

Maybe we will make excuses by saying, "We are born to die, so what does it matter just killing a few? Even if we do not kill animals, they themselves will die after a period of time or through encountering disasters or diseases." Or we may think, "If we don't kill such and such person, later he himself will be sick to death or get old and die. Therefore what does it matter to kill a few people?" Of course it matters a lot, because his time has not come and we force him to die. It's just as we can eat fruits or vegetables only when they are ripe; or else we may become ill, we will get bellyache, headache, etc. Therefore, when we kill, we force the soul to go out of the body when he does not want to and is not ready to leave because his time has not come. If we force him, we bring about karmic hindrances.

Now let me tell you a little story. When Shakyamuni was alive, there was a king who was imprisoned by his son. Ori-

nally a child should pay filial obedience to his parents, but this son didn't. He imprisoned his own father, and even when his mother went to the prison to see her husband, bringing some food for him, the prince, who had become the king then, was very angry and put the queen into jail as well. If you have read Buddhist stories, you will know that both of them were kept in prison.

Yesterday I told you about the Guan Wu Liang Shou Sutra. This is the Buddhist Sutra on account of that queen. When the queen was suffering so much from being imprisoned, she prayed that Buddha, who was her Master, would come to her help. The transcendental bodies of Shakyamuni and Ananda, Maudgalaputra came together to the prison to teach her, comfort her. Then she asked Buddha, "Is there a world which is better and more pure, less suffering than this one?" Thereupon Shakyamuni showed her many worlds among which she liked the Western Paradise most. Thereafter we had this Guan Wu Liang Shou Sutra.

The retribution of this queen was due to a previous cause. The agonized queen asked Shakyamuni, "We haven't done anything evil, why has all this come to us? Why has the prince treated us so bad? I beg You to let us know the reason."

Then Buddha told her, "Do you remember that some decades ago, having no son, both of you went to pray for begetting a son? Because you were so sincerely praying, one day you dreamed that an angel came to tell you, 'A man is practicing in the Himalayas, who in the future will become your son, the prince.' Next day you woke up and went to find that practitioner, asking him if he was willing to be your son. That practitioner, already knowing his lot while entering into samadhi,

replied to you, 'Yes, I am willing. But I still have three years of life. May I ask your Majesty to please wait for three more years during which I shall practice more? After that my life will be ended, and I will be born again as your son.'

"But the king was very impatient and said, 'We are so old now. Three more years, and possibly I will pass away. It's unsafe to wait. You'd better be my son immediately.'

"The practitioner answered, 'No. Don't force me. It's not the end of my life now; the time of my death has not come.'

"The anxious king then threatened him with his sword pointing at him, saying, 'Be my son now. I can no longer wait.'

"Not yet a spiritual practitioner at that time, the king was impulsive. He did not keep any charity, precepts, endurance. He hadn't met my teachings then. Therefore he forced that practitioner to die, so that the man finally proclaimed, 'Alas, while I am still alive you use your power to compel me to die. In the future, when I will be your son, I will not pay filial piety to you, and I will kill you and usurp the throne!' Finishing this he drank poison to kill himself.

"Consequently after he had died the queen at once became pregnant, and then gave birth to a prince. The king ordered a fortune-teller to read the baby's future, who also predicted the same thing as the practitioner. He said, 'After growing up the prince will disturb the peace of the palace. He will kill the king and afterwards treat the queen badly...'

"Hearing this, you were so frightened that you threw out the prince from the third floor, trying to kill him as you did not want to bring him up, for fear of the future misfortune. But the prince did not die, only broke a finger. When you held him up, he was still crying loudly. Very soon the prince grew to be

very handsome and clever, that the king and queen adored him too much to kill him, thinking, 'All right, it doesn't matter. We will bring him up.' So you did not expect that when he grew up he really would commit such tremendous crimes."

The queen recalled all this. She repented very much and no more hated her son. Later, her son also regretted and converted himself to follow the Buddha, practicing devotedly, and became a very good person.

I've told you this story because I want you to understand it is impossible to run away from the Law of Karma – *As you sow, so shall you reap*. When we kill, we force the souls to go out of the bodies, therefore we have to face the causation. What we've killed will come back to kill us or compel us to die, just as we did them. We may be born again as animals and be killed, not definitely be killed as human beings, and not necessarily in this life. We may possibly settle this karma in the next life.

Therefore all religions, all sects emphasize "not killing," which includes not killing animals, because animals have souls. They also love life and fear death, unlike vegetables and trees and stones, which do not have the consciousness of wanting to live and fearing of death. Therefore the karmic hindrance of taking vegetables is very little, which can be cut to the least – almost equal to zero – if every day we practice Quan Yin Method for two and a half hours. But animals have consciousness and are afraid of death as much as human beings are, hence the hindrance if we kill them.

So, now back to the situation of human beings. Why do people suffer so much in dying even if they are not forced to die, or not killed by others? It is because they are not prepared,

the “door” is not yet open. For example, suppose the door here is closed, having not been opened for a long time, then certainly it will be out of order. Even with all the effort we cannot open it. Then when a fire breaks out, panicked, we want to open the door but we just can't. So we try to bump the door but then we might be burnt, hurt and feel painful. If the door is opened every day, it will be smooth and can be very easily pushed to open and we can go out immediately without any problem.

Similarly, our bodies have many “doors,” which however are not all good. For example, if we live on the third floor, we cannot go out by jumping out of the window because we will be hurt. We have the staircase to go down. But maybe because we don't know we have it, or we forget where it is when we are nervous, we might just scamper about in the fire and finally get burnt. Therefore we have to practice. It's just as when the war has not broken out, our government will have us exercise the air-defense as if in the real war.

When I was in Au Lac the government also had the alarm system, once a week or once a month. When we heard the siren, “woooo,” we would run to hide in some safe places and came out after five or ten minutes or so when we would hear another “all clear” signal. We, of course, knew that nothing happened but we had to practice in this way each time.

But most of the dying people did not practice in advance. We all know that one day we will die but no one thinks that we should prepare for it now. Ordinary people only think about, “What am I going to eat in the morning, and in the afternoon, at night?” And after ten o'clock in the night they still go out to have a snack. Just pay a little attention and you will notice this. There are at most only some hundreds of audience attending

my lecture, but there outside many more are eating. Those who eat occupy much greater proportion than those listening to the spiritual lecture. It is because they do not want to practice for dying, they simply forgot. Though knowing that sooner or later they will be dead, they feel there are still a hundred years to go.

Is it true, a hundred years? It's difficult to say. Maybe tomorrow we'll die. Many people died young. Therefore we should be more smart – prepare for death when we are alive.

Do you prepare well for giving birth before it happens? You will sew something or buy some lovely clothes, waiting for the baby's birth. Moreover, you will try to make sure whether the baby is boy or girl so that you can make the preparations accordingly. We care about the birth that has not taken place so well. But why not death, which above all is the most important thing? When we bear a baby many people come to care for us, comfort us, accompany us. But when we die no one can be with us though it is the moment that we are loneliest, most suffering. Why don't we take steps now? Is it wise not to?

Now we know we suffer from death because we are not ready for it. To get ready we should find the one who can open the door for us. And then every day we should open the door and close it, and open it and close it, so that the door will be easy to open when it is time for us to go. Otherwise it is difficult to go out because we have so many doors that are not the exits. For example, the window here looks having a space, but if we go out from the window our heads will be hurt. We should use the main door. But we still cannot leave if the main door is not open.

In our bodies, eyes are doors. Ears, noses are also doors. Our bodies have nine holes and they are all doors to exit from

which, however, will make us transmigrate again in the realms that are not high. There is only one door from which we can go to high realms, which we cannot see by physical eyes, cannot open with common keys. Only the great practitioners can open it. Being not able to open it ourselves, we should ask the one who has achieved the stage, who has opened the door and knows how to open it and will teach us, help us. For them it's very easy to open the door.

Everyone prepares for giving birth, for old-age and for sickness. Is it not so, that when we are still working we will try to save some money lest in the unknown future any sickness should occur to stop us from working? It is even necessary for us to accumulate some merits to use when we die. Merits are not to be gained by giving in charity, though it helps because when we give, our minds are broadened. Rather than thinking of ourselves all day we also have others in mind, and when we have room for others our minds will be more open. Therefore, during the war people's minds are more open. We will think of the safety of the nation rather than our own families. We extend our minds. For example, if we clamp our eyes only on the noses, then we will only know our noses. But when our attentions are diverted to beautiful women we forget our noses. At that time aren't the spaces of our minds expanded to the beautiful women?

Similarly, when we give things in charity, our minds become broadened, we forget the ego, our space becomes wider. And when our space becomes wider, we feel easier without feeling being choked. That's why people who give in charity are more at ease. They appear more free and happier because their minds are broad and wide, just like the eyes that look at

distant places. If we live in a cramped room we feel stifled. Is it not so? We feel as if we're imprisoned. If the house is big we will feel that it is better ventilated. Is that not so? Some people, after living in cities for a long time, feel very dull and therefore take holidays to go to the countryside, or the hills, because they need space. The same with giving charity. It means to create invisible space and good atmosphere for us to breathe. It helps our spirits.

Therefore all religions teach us that we should love others as we do ourselves, because charity is beneficial to us. But just giving has nothing to do with opening our wisdom-door. Even if you give alms, charity every day, after a million years you still are unable to open the wisdom-door, which must be opened by a professional, who is like a doctor specialized in performing operations; an architect specialized in building houses; or a teacher specialized in teaching English. An enlightened person is specialized in opening the door to wisdom for others because he/she has perfectly opened his/her own.

If we have not opened this invisible door, our souls will run blindly. If we die in the condition of having not practiced "dying," all doors in our bodies are closed when the souls want to depart, so they will run around, move around, which is why we feel riven with pain. If the doors are ready, the souls (so-called consciousness, Master) will find their ways out immediately.

If the opened door is a good one, after going out, the souls will be happier. If bad ones, the souls will encounter difficulties immediately. They will casually find a womb and enter, and perhaps become human beings, which is not so bad. But if it's animal's uterus, then trouble arises. These things did

happen. Newspapers and television sometimes have these reports: an animal shed tears, or an animal looked like a human being, or a man looked like an animal, etc. These were because the souls ran out confused without knowing the road.

During initiation Master will teach you which road you should take, just like the exercise for the air attack. Although the exercise is not real, when actual condition happens you will be able to handle it easily. It's also the same case as soldiers'. In Formosa, young men who reach certain age must undergo military service. Is that not so? Even after the service they will be summoned to review the practices once in a while. The same with our practice. At initiation I will teach you how to die; nothing special, but just teach you how to die. But afterward you have to practice every day. If not, you will forget.

Why is it so? Because you have been too familiar, too close to this world, that your attentions are given to your husbands or wives, to your work, to your boss. For example, maybe you want to take a nap, but they immediately will come to disturb you, your wife may come to bother you. Is that not so? Therefore every day we should save two and a half hours to practice dying.

It's like the military service. Everyone knows that the soldiers have to receive training in the ordinary time so that when wars break out they can fight with enemies easily. But no one ever thought that we should train ourselves how to die, which is nothing mysterious, nothing unreasonable, but simply a very natural matter like eating and sleeping. Since no one reminds us, no one uses simple logics to explain to us this truth, we mistake it for a very mysterious and complicated thing that only Shakyamuni could do, while we as common

people cannot.

Really, what is the difference between Shakyamuni and us? He had nose, eyes, ears, and we have them, too. He even had more karmic hindrances than us. This no one told you because they dared not. But today I will tell you about His karmic hindrances.

He was born a prince, with everyone competing in hugging Him; with tens, or even hundreds of nurse-maids hurrying to take care of Him any time He cried. He was greatly indebted. For nearly thirty years He had done nothing beneficial to others except idling away His time in the worldly pleasures including the frequent hunting. Even the places He lived in were differentiated according to the seasons – spring palace, summer palace, winter palace... How could all this be beneficial to others?

He did not keep any of the charity, precepts, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom – namely, the six ways to perfection that we say the human being should perform. He did not give but only took. He was brought up with the nation's properties. Every day lots of people cared for Him, and His parents kept around Him, answering to His any desire. His subordinates, His many wives followed Him, serving His any demands immediately. The whole nation served Him only. In this way He owed many people a lot, didn't He?

We have heard that if one does not give charity or does not work, one's karmic hindrances will be very heavy. Is that not so? We should be good persons, good husbands, good wives. We should benefit society because we have to repay four kinds of benefactors. But Shakyamuni did not pay the slightest. Up to thirty years He only enjoyed the world. Was

not His karmic hindrance deep and heavy? But even that kind of person could become Buddha, not to speak of you who are so nice, to have paid filial piety since childhood; to have helped society a lot; who have compassion, loving kindness; who have kept charity, precepts, patience!

Definitely you can become Buddha. This I can assure you. Don't look down upon yourselves. The problem lies in ourselves – we don't respect ourselves. Maybe we are arrogant toward others, but that doesn't mean we respect ourselves. Respecting oneself and arrogance are two different things.

What is arrogance? It means one looks at others with only “eyes half open.” He sees that women are not good; those poorly learned are not good; his subordinates are bad, and the boss is bad because “he” is more intelligent than they are; “he” cannot be the boss only because he has no capital. This is arrogance – one respects neither others nor oneself. Because he doesn't respect himself so he doesn't respect others. This sort of arrogance is rather a kind of illness than the real self-respect.

Who really respects himself also appreciates others; he knows both his own values and others' values. These kinds of people are good, self-confident, but not arrogant. Arrogant people cannot reach Buddhahood because they do not show regard for others; only self-confident persons can. We should distinguish these two different kinds of people and be the latter one – holding self-confidence, believing that we all except none can become Buddha. I would go to hell if I told you this falsely.

No one cannot become Buddha, but many cannot become Buddha. Why do I say so? Because there is the lack of self-confidence; of the guidance of an enlightened Master, of the person who encourages us to practice, who will tell us who

we are, what our value is, and what we can become.

Or maybe there is the one who has told us this, but we neither understand nor believe him/her because we've been influenced so much by society. Our parents might have scolded us since our childhood, saying, "You will be the beggar when you grow up. Just looking at your face I am certain that you will not be anyone," and if we believe in that, when we grow up we will not have confidence in ourselves. Then afterwards we are affected by society. Friends and employers may reproach us, "You are no good. You are so bad because, because..." and we believe. Teachers also say the similar thing, "You stupid students just can't understand me even I've taught for so many times. How stupid you can't speak English!" But this actually is not stupid because being incapable to learn worldly things is not stupid.

To tell you frankly, there is nothing in the world that is worthy to be learned. We have studied all the way from primary schools, secondary schools and universities, but what have we got? For nineteen years, how much can we really use? We might even have forgotten them all. Learning English for years but still we cannot speak English, and so it is for learning French. Mathematics study has not enabled us to calculate. Nowadays using calculator is even faster. We have learned a lot but we've gained little. We've learned English but we don't know how to translate. I dare say many university graduates present here cannot even answer my simple questions, like "What is mathematics in Chinese?" (Master laughs) Why? Because worldly things are not of much use to us.

The world is impermanent. Even if we learn a great deal, it won't help much. The great scientists have to die, the most

famous genius also has to leave this world, all empty-handed. Therefore, one being not good in learning worldly things is not stupid, nor is one having not graduated from school. The most, really stupid are those who have not learned how to die. Most people have never wondered that with all the good knowledge about birth, old-age and illness. Why have they not learned about the subject of “death”? These are really stupid people. Because dying is such a racking matter. What a suffering it is, when the five elements of our body – metal, wood, water, fire and earth – are separating!

Therefore we see that dying people are so agonized, so tortured. Is that not so? At that moment it's vain that the Buddhist teacher to whom we took devotion stands there reciting Buddhas' names; that our parents also stand there reciting the same for us; that our teachers speak English to us; that the diploma of our doctorate is displayed for us to see. Husbands or wives and children don't know how to help. That's why we should look for the one who can help us when we are dying.

Today a man came to ask me, “When people are dying, most of them are unwilling to leave, grieving for their husbands or wives, burdened by the worldly worries. Like this, how can one let go of life on Earth?” This really is a serious problem. We suffer because we are attached to this world on the one hand, and on the other hand because we have not prepared ourselves. That's why to find a living, real Master is so necessary, who is the so-called Buddha. I don't like to use the word “Buddha” because whenever I mentioned this you immediately link it with Shakyamuni of Buddhism. So I use the name “enlightened Master” or “real Master,” which suggests a person who has attained the level of Buddha; the level transcending the transmi-

gration circle; meaning he or she can go up and down in the life and death circle as freely as us going in and out of the door. That's why he or she can bring us up, if we have received his or her initiation to be the disciples when we are still alive.

What is initiation? It means that the real Master puts us in his or her hands, under his or her protection, and when we die his or her transcendental bodies – so beautiful, so bright, with the so-called thirty-two kinds of good features – along with many other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will come to receive us. When we see appearing of the Master and Western Pure Land we will forget our husbands and wives, because upon comparison we will find that they are so ugly and we will think, “Leave me alone. I want to go with Buddhas and Bodhisattvas now.”

But actually you don't even need to think. The Master will immediately take you up, leaving you no time to think of your husbands or wives and this world. You will hear not their cries but Master's speech and the heavenly melody. How wonderful it will be! You will see not your grieving husbands or wives or relatives but the extremely shining, dignified, powerful Master, and the marvelous Western Paradise or other good realms, depending on the level you achieve in practice when you die.

For example, my disciples have different levels in practice. Those having attained the First Level will see the First World when they die, which is already more beautiful than this world, with living beings more beautiful than ours in this world. At that time we'll find that our wives mean nothing at all – too ugly to compare – and we will no more linger around them. If not so, we cannot loose hold of this world because we have been tied up very tight, life after life, this life being of course no exception!

We've been familiar to this world and we do not know other worlds. If there is no better realm appearing to attract us or there are no divine Buddhas and Bodhisattvas coming to guide us, we won't be able to run away from this world. Therefore an enlightened Master is very important, who will come to pick us up when we die, bringing our souls out by diverting our attention, not letting us be still bound by this world.

To get initiation is to learn about “dying,” and nothing else. However, even it's learning “dying” we should learn the better condition so that when we actually die we can freely choose the realm we want to go after death, unlike other people who are so passive and helpless.

When the majority of people, who have had some virtues while they are living, leave this world they will also see Light and hear Music, but only that of very low level. For example, they may reach the level of the First World, the Asura world, where there are Heavens and hells. Not all Asura's places are bad and we can also see Light there.

In America there is an amateur prophet, whose profession is a doctor. In the hospital where he worked he especially recorded what had been said by those patients who had died and revived, and discovered that all experiences told were similar. They all saw Light, or a man of Light coming to pick them up, etc. Though these people were not Truth practitioners, but since they had some blessed rewards – being virtuous persons while alive – therefore they could go to Heaven after they died and were welcomed by “men of Light” who were the angels. Angels have Light, and so those people said that they had seen Light. Some people cried for weeks after returning from the very nice and beautiful place, because it's so beautiful

that they were unwilling to come back to this world. However, the people over there told them to return, saying, “You have not finished the relations with that world. The karmic effects of this life have not been ended yet.” Therefore after these persons came back they cried and cried for several weeks, finding it difficult to speak about it, until other people asked.

Most of people, who had been to higher realms during the interval between their deaths and revivals, dared not tell others their experiences; because even if they did, no one would believe them. This happens especially in Western countries, like in America, where people would trust science rather than these after-death happenings. A great part of people who had come back from their death journeys felt very lonely, and cried for a long time because they could not live in the beautiful realms they had seen, having to continue the lives here. Of course it's hardly bearable.

I always like to see people happy; however, amongst my disciples was the one who one day wept at the sight of my appearance. When I asked, “Why?” she said, “The inner Master brought me to the higher sphere, and after I've come back to see this world again, I feel so disgusted that I hardly can live any longer!” But we still have to keep on living, instead of escaping, which is not the way of the higher practitioners but the beginners will take because they are so eager to depart for the higher worlds. Anyone who follows my instructions to practice will go to higher realms in the future, so why is the rush now, and the tears? Anyway, some people still cry; because after enjoying all the wonderful, beautiful spheres they still have to come out of meditation to go into the daily routines such as taking care of husband, children, shopping in the dirty markets,

etc. And it's even bitter if their husbands don't treat them well.

This happens only to new practitioners who do not have enough mind-controlling power, being accustomed to making comparisons between the higher realms and this world. While high practitioners are indifferent to happiness or suffering. They deal with both without any problem. Otherwise how can they keep on living?

Even my Master's Master appeared annoyed just for one day, and possibly it was due to some reasons that on that day he did not feel very well, and his disciples weren't obedient, etc. Otherwise he wouldn't have had annoyance. Sometimes I also felt annoyed but I wouldn't let others know it. Because if even a Master would leave owing to this, how much more the students!

Some disciples, after practicing for a period of time, might say that they want to quit their husbands or wives. But it's impracticable, because our worldly responsibilities have to be fulfilled, our fixed karma has to be settled. We cannot escape. Practitioners of Quan Yin Method should be courageous, enduring whatever bitterness, for this is their last life in this world. We are so lucky comparing with other people, who have to come back to this world. And it's unknown for how long they've to wait to come. And when they come back they may not be born as human beings again, but more likely than not as ghosts, or animals, etc.

At the time of initiation we know that this is our last life, but the lazy initiates who don't follow my instruction to practice every day must come back, maybe for three or four times and not just one time. I do not promise that lazy people can be liberated in one life-time. Even Shakyamuni also did not do so. We see in His time some followers only achieved the fruition

of Srota-apanna, which means they had to come back for two, three or four times, unlike Arhat who doesn't have to come again. Those achieving Arhatship (sainthood) must be diligent practitioners of high level, while Srota-apanna means one who slowly practices, maybe at intervals of two or three days. Consequently these kinds of people have to return to this world.

Being born again into this world is really suffering. We have first to be children, who know nothing about what's what, then after growing up, possible we won't be able to find a real Master till we are very old. Many people were over eighty and they wanted to follow me. To them usually I would advise them just to recite Amitabha's name, because it's already too late. My Master and my Master's Master were even strict. They rejected to initiate those who were older than sixty, except in the case that they were parents of the old initiates. There were exceptions, however, when I sometimes saw that the situations were particular.

My disciples include all ages, ranging from six to over eighty, male and female. They all can practice and have very good experiences just like that of Arhats or Bodhisattvas in the ancient times.

Arhats and Bodhisattvas are actually not any extraordinary sentient beings. On the outside they look like us, with nothing different. Only on the inside they are different. Their inner level is higher, their consciousness has grown, and their wisdom is largely developed. The inner level will be changed after one gets initiation from Master.

Shakyamuni accepted a disciple who before that had killed ninety-nine persons and was intending to kill Him to add the number to one hundred. Such a person, with undoubt-

edly very heavy bad karma, should deserve the retribution of falling into the uninterrupted hell. Is that not so? After he had killed Arhats he further wanted to kill the Buddha! However, Shakyamuni saved him, because he believed in Him. He repented and reformed himself thereafter and finally, by the practice, also became an Arhat. That's how a living enlightened Master is precious.

Therefore in the Sutra Shakyamuni acclaimed: ***It is difficult to find a Buddha, to come across a Buddha. Only by taking refuge in a Buddha can one be liberated and not fall into hells or animals' worlds!*** The word "Buddha" means a living enlightened Master, and taking refuge does not mean to just stick to Shakyamuni – we did so when He was still alive; but after He's gone we should take refuge in His disciple, and when His disciple also left, His disciple's disciple, and so on. The tradition of taking refuge, that we have now, is the inheritance from ancient time.

Therefore, to obtain the real liberation we must find the present real Master, which has as nothing to do with paying rituals to the past enlightened Masters, as to cure our illness has to do with paying bows to the past great doctors like Hua Tuo, Bien Chueh. Because they were past doctors who could not cure our present illness, we should go to the present doctor, who may not be very famous, but he can help us. He does not need to be as famous as Hua Tuo. Is that not so? Hua Tuo and Bien Chueh were two marvelous doctors best known in China, but they have been gone and cannot help us, no matter how much we worship them.

Similarly, what is the use of worshipping the past Buddhas? We may, we should do that out of respect; respect for

the past, present and coming Masters. But to get liberation we should look for a real Master who is still living, who has opened His/Her own door and attained the ultimate liberation; who has the key to open the door for us.

It is a very simple matter with nothing mysterious and nothing extraordinary. Originally we should learn how to handle all of the four subjects: birth, aging, illness and death. Now that we have learned three, what is so big, so illogical to learn one more? Death is the necessary subject, besides birth, aging, and illness that we should learn; and to learn it we have to find a person who is completely free in dying and living. He or she can die or live at will. Only these kinds of people can help us because they are specialists. He or she is competent to teach us about death just as an English teacher can teach us English. Maybe you are very afraid of death, but you cannot avoid it; and since you cannot avoid it, you should learn to deal with it as soon as possible. Is that not so?

Do you want to learn dying? You have no choice, anyway, because otherwise you will meet with tremendous agony when it's time that the Hades messengers come to force you to leave. If we have this door opened when we are living, then dying will not be a problem.

Besides the nine holes, our body has an invisible door here, (Master points to the wisdom-eye) which is the tenth door; which will open immediately when we die if we have practiced Quan Yin Method every day while alive. It takes only one second, but because your doors have been closed all the time, Master needs an hour to open it.

Yesterday you asked, "Master, You have not given us the key." It's no problem that I can give you the key, but it takes

an hour because your door is difficult to open. I can open my door any time, but your door has been closed for a long, long time that I need to knock and knock it again, which requires a longer time. It is not Master does not want to give you the key immediately, just that to give you the key I must ask you to fulfill some conditions. Just as when asking people to open or close the worldly doors or make worldly keys you should pay him money or treat him to a dinner. If you want Master to open the door you have to follow my requirements: to keep vegan diet and spare two and a half hours every day for me to help you open that door which you cannot open by yourselves. These two and a half hours is my charge. That's all there is to it. Nothing else I require particularly.

Those who want Master to open the door for you should restrain themselves strictly from killing because they should have compassionate mind. This is my first requirement. Since we do not want to be forced to painful deaths, naturally we cannot do to other sentient beings what we ourselves do not desire. Good cause leads to good effect. We should let sentient beings die peacefully because we want to die peacefully. Otherwise how shall we receive this good result if we have not created good cause? If I do not teach you not to kill, then my teaching will only be a falsehood, a trick, and against the Law of Cause and Effect. How can one person plant the orange tree and then reap apples? It is impossible. That is why I have first to describe these prerequisites.

The everyday two and a half hours I ask from you actually is not given to me, but to you yourselves. But it means the same, because when you are happy, I am happy. Therefore if you do not want to do it for your own sake, then at least you do

it for me. Give me this two and a half hours every day. I do not desire anything else, except to ask for your alms of two and a half hours. If you are willing to give it, you will die happy, and every day live happily even. You go to the Western Paradise when you meditate, then return to work when you come out of meditation. It's just like that, every day the students go to schools to study and then come home and have dinner and do homework. Then next day do the same again.

The so-called “constantly studying with Buddha” means to study in the Buddha's Land, not in this world. What in reality can we learn from this world? Even I cannot teach you anything in this world, besides telling you some common reasons and chatting with you, as I am doing now. But if you go to higher realms, Master can teach you other higher theories, because we use different means in the higher realms.

Yesterday I talked about the First World. Anything invented by the beings there, like machines, is much more advanced than ours; is not what we can imagine, what we have ever seen or heard of. We think that we are very civilized as we have computers, televisions, telephones, etc., which actually are nothing but their garbage fallen into our world and we picked them up. Even the best scientists in this world came from the worst students or those who could not graduate in their world. Those who can graduate there are in the noble realms doing other things.

So, “constantly learning with Buddha” means to go to study in Buddha's Land. In this world Master will also try the best to teach you. But if you go to the higher realms Master will teach different things, and the higher your level is, the more different you will be taught.

There are schools in each world. For example, in this world at our Center, Master teaches you a little of the inner mysterious things, and at the schools of the higher realms Master will teach higher level wisdom. When you are sleeping, I will bring you to higher schools to learn. I do it when you are sleeping because in the daytime you are too busy and some people do not even meditate, that I cannot take them out.

It is easier to bring people to other places during their sleep because then they will not struggle and their brains will not be so stubborn. In the daytime it is much more difficult. They make excuses that they have no time to meditate, but even if they have time they will go to dance or gossip with others, doing those stuff, things. It is not that you should not dance or watch television, just that you should spare some time for meditation every day. There will be no problem if you do not have time to watch TV, but you cannot forget meditation, forget the practice of dying every day. If you have four hours free today, you can watch television for one and a half hours and meditate for two and a half hours. If you only have two and a half hours another day, then you have to use all of this time to meditate.

However, if you do not have a true Master to instruct you, you will only be “imitating” meditation, not really meditating. To “imitate” meditation means you don't meditate correctly. One might get possessed, or drowsy if one does not meditate correctly. I say “imitation” of meditation because most of people meditate wrongly, not knowing where to concentrate. Those properly meditating are very happy, not feeling drowsy; and the more they meditate, the better the situation becomes.

What is meditation? It is “Ch'an Ding” (Chinese). Ch'an means detaching from the worldly outward forms, and Ding means keeping undisturbed inward.

(During the while someone has been making noises outside the lecture hall) Now you know what Maya means if you haven't seen one before. What is Maya? That which hinders me from delivering the lecture by making my car unable to move, or deliberately causes disturbances when I am lecturing, is Maya. They don't need to have horns on their heads. He is Maya who stops, obstructs people or practitioners, or an enlightened Master from saving sentient beings; who bars sentient beings from coming to the lecture, or makes them fall asleep or chat when Master gives lectures; who diverts the audience's attention from the Truth to their own messy preconceived ideas; and who causes people to make a lot of useless talk all day long.

Though this lecture will last for only two hours, a few of the audience do not treasure the time and even talk because they feel themselves are so important. They have talked to others for the whole day and still want to talk here, not wanting to give Master the chance to speak. This is the situation of one being influenced by Maya. Maya is not himself, but a kind of negative force which makes him become that way.

One day when my master was giving lecture in Germany, a person from outside went to the podium, intending to throw many horse's feces at my master. My master just said, “OK. Give them to me,” and unexpectedly nothing happened. That man stuck fast there – neither could throw out nor put down the feces. More strange was that each time he tried to throw out, he was like being shocked by electricity. He would sud-

denly stop there, not being able to move forward or backward. He eventually could move away when my master gave a gesture. And when he went out, the things he had carried dropped on me, who happened to be sitting at the front seat. So my bag collected full those “garbage” of sentient beings. (Laughter)

It is not easy to be a Master, as Maya (negative force) always hinders him. Why does Maya's hindrance exist? It is the collective karma of sentient beings. Because some of the people who come to listen to the lecture have not enough blessed reward but heavy karmic hindrances and arrogant minds. So the devil makes use of these kinds of people to cause troubles. If everyone attending here has a pure and humble mind, devils cannot disturb us. Maya exists, and the fixed karma, collective karma exist, because sentient beings are not pure enough.

People who have similar karma are born in the same country, or live in the same family or in the same group. This is so-called collective karma. Besides this there is individual karma, which comes particularly with individuals. To be free from both fixed karma and collective karma we must depend on practice, because we ourselves have the greatest Power which is the so-called Original Face or the Buddha Nature. Shakyamuni Buddha did not say you should believe in God, but He said: ***Rely on your Self and be the lamp of yourself.***

What is the Self? It is our Original Face. Buddha did not say to rely on our physical brains. It is the so-called: ***All sentient beings have Buddha Nature, and all sentient beings are Buddhas.*** We are common human beings before we recognize this Self, and we become Buddhas after we do. Within ourselves there is Buddha Nature, but there is Maya as well. When a person develops the aspect of Maya more, he will de-

scend to the Maya's sphere.

In Buddhism these two kinds of forces are called Buddha and Maya; in Taoism, Yin and Yang – meaning negativity and positivity. Develop Yin, and we will become negative; develop Yang and we will become positive. And to develop both negativity, positivity equally is Tao (the Truth). The ordinary mind is Tao. Who acts in accordance with Tao is who is in the balance of negativity and positivity, who is the Real Man. The Real Man means the one who neither leans toward negativity nor to positivity, not necessarily referring to men only. Women's Buddha Nature is the same as men.

When the sixth Ch'an (Zen) Patriarch, Hui Neng, first went to see the fifth Patriarch, he was small and thin and not good-looking and coming from Au Lac. Therefore the fifth Patriarch scolded him, "You are a barbarian. How can you become Buddha?" At that time Chinese people called the Aulacese barbarians because they had occupied Aulacese land and despised them. Small, dark and skinny, Hui Neng was woodcutter and earned his poor living by cutting wood. Therefore at the first sight the fifth Patriarch scolded him that way. But the sixth Patriarch then replied, "Men can be distinguished as south people and north people, but Buddha Nature has not such distinction."

And I say the same thing. Human beings can be divided into men and women, but the Buddha Nature of them is one. Those who attach to the thought that only man can become Buddha are absolutely wrong. A woman is one who possesses more negativity, who has female qualities; while a man is one who inclines more to positivity. And the Real Man means the person who has achieved the balanced state of "Yin and Yang" – negativity and positivity.

Therefore the Real Man does not refer to the physical “man.” Of course the body is needed to help sentient beings, but it's not the “form” of the Real Man, which we can see only with our Buddha-eye, heavenly eye or wisdom-eye, and not the physical eyes. However, after the wisdom-eye is opened and developed to a certain degree, possibly the physical ones can see the Real Man's form as well because then the physical eyes become the wisdom-eye. With physical eyes open we can also meditate, we can still see hells and Heavens. Although the body is here giving lecture, the transcendental body can at the same time go to the States to save the students there; can answer to prayers of sentient beings in any place. That's what is called, “With hundreds of billions of (meaning countless) transcendental bodies.”

It's not only Shakyamuni Buddha could have the countless transcendental bodies. Anyone who has attained the Ultimate Enlightenment (the Truth) can have countless transcendental bodies, and everyone who has received this person's initiation will have His or Her transcendental body to look after him. Otherwise how can these kinds of persons take care of and protect so many disciples? How can the Master with only one physical body look after so many people? How can the Master guarantee that He or She will bring the students to higher worlds when they die?

It must be that these kinds of persons have countless transcendental bodies, namely, anyone can receive His or Her protection. Then we can call Him or Her, Shih Fu (Chinese), meaning Teacher and Father, because He or She is both like a teacher teaching us and like a father looking after the children, and saves our souls. When we call them Fa Shih (Chi-

nese, meaning Master of Dharma), it's because they can teach people Dharma. Fa Shih, a Master who has attained the Tao, a Master of Dharma, is like an English teacher who can speak English because he is master of English. Only the one who has achieved the Dharma can be called Fa Shih or Shih Fu, otherwise it is only a nominal name without any real power.

How to Reach the Inborn Heaven

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
May 24, 1989
San Francisco, CA, U.S.A.
(Originally in English)

Every day, for many years I spoke Chinese, and even up to the last minute. I was a little bit nervous that my English would die somewhere, (Laughter) but we will try together with your blessing. Everyone of us has a great blessing, and the blessing will flow out from our sincerity. This is what we call God's blessing. God's blessing is human's blessing, God resides within us. So, with your sincerity and your devoted attention, my English will probably improve by each minute.

So my very dear friends, good brothers and sisters, it is the first time that we see each other, but I believe that we have had a lot of affinity in the past. According to Buddhism, and even Catholicism, we believe in the “life after life”; we believe in the so-called “cause and condition.” Whatever happens today is the fruit of what happened in the past. That is the Law of Cause and Retribution – what we call “karma” in Sanskrit. Karma means *whatever you sow, so shall you reap* in Christian terminology.

I am so happy, I am so happy that you, the ladies and gentlemen of a very busy society and very high standard of civilization have saved a little bit of your very valuable time to come here and listen to a stranger from a strange land. I’m so happy. It means God’s blessing is with us. I’m sure you’re doing something well.

Now, all of you are probably expecting me to say something more than just politeness such as, “How are you?” and “Weather is fine.” So I will get right away to the point, not letting you wait too long. Is it OK? Is everyone comfortable? (Applause)

It is not the first time that I give some information in America; it’s just formerly it was not publicized, that’s all. It was just in New York, to a small group of people. But anyhow, I was thinking when we have some good things, we have a duty to share it with our fellow beings, with our friends and brothers. Whether they accept it or not is their full right, but I have the duty to proclaim it, to introduce it, and then let our brothers and sisters make the choice. Therefore I feel bound enough to come and share with you this joyous occasion.

This is a blessing from Heaven, or from whatever the mightiest Power that you may name. In different countries we call this Power by different names. In Chinese they call it Tao; in Sanskrit they call it Buddha Nature; in other sects they call it Ch'an (Zen); and in Christianity they call it God, God's blessing or Heaven.

But where is this Heaven? We look in the Bible and it is said: *Heaven is within us*, that means in our hearts. But if we operated our hearts, would we find any Heaven? (Laughter) No. That's true. When some people have a heart attack or something like that, we opened it and saw nothing inside. So there must be something else besides this physical heart. Actually, when the ancient people said "heart" they meant our wisdom, our thinking, not this physical heart. So, why is it that we call this wisdom Heaven? Because if we have this wisdom, we feel we are in Heaven, we feel so happy, so satisfied.

Today, while driving to San Francisco – we live in San Jose, my disciple's house, and she drove me here – we were talking on the way. She told me that since initiation, after learning the method from me, she was not practicing very diligently. She was meditating off and on. But when I asked her, "Have you acquired any satisfaction?" She said, "Yes, yes, yes. Definitely. Inside I feel so satisfied, so joyous, which people do not understand from outside." She couldn't use the language to express her inner joy, and therefore she was causing some misunderstanding.

Language is not sufficient to describe this kind of inside joy, this heavenly blessing, because the world of Heaven and the world of ours are of different spheres. It's just like that the human world and the animal world are different. Even though

we are living in the same world, animals and us sometimes living in very close contact, but animals oftentimes do not understand us and we do not understand them. Of course there are some animals which are almost human, you might say; such as dogs, cats and horses. Sometimes they can feel almost like humans and respond in a humanly way, and we seem to establish, between human and the pets, some type of very close affection. Then we feel like we understand each other, even though there is still a big gap between a human and an animal.

Similarly, there are some human beings who have “super knowledge,” what we call “supra-intelligence,” great intelligence. Even though from the outside they look exactly like us, but inwardly they are not the same. This is why sometimes if we reach such height of intelligence, we cannot express it to others who are in a lesser degree of intelligence.

Why is it that there is such a difference between human begins? We can see very well for ourselves. In our daily lives we meet different kinds of people, for example, scientists. They are a little more intelligent than the average persons, or so we expect, even though from their outward appearances they look just like us. You cannot tell from the first glance who is the scientist, who is the physician, who is the lawyer, and who is the President – well, of course, the President we can tell right away. I'm sorry I made a mistake. Because he is too famous, with all televisions broadcast his face and we all know. What I mean is for the most, the ordinary intelligent men, we could not tell right away. Is it not so?

Now, this kind of intelligence we can acquire for ourselves. It's just like that we learn to become a scientist or to become a doctor, a lawyer or some kind of more specific in-

telligent person. For example, when we were young we had no knowledge, we could not read or write. But then slowly, by learning, we know how to do it, and we learn many other things along the way. Now, it's the same thing, that we can acquire greater knowledge, what we call “supra-wisdom,” wisdom. It is not the so-called human intelligence, but the cosmos wisdom. This is something that is not so mysterious, not very difficult to acquire.

I was so surprised, after having acquired it, that it was so easy. It is a kind of what Americans call “know-how” only. It is the same as every science, every work, every specialty, as you learn how to build a bridge, how to make an airplane. A hundred years ago it was impossible to think that you could fly from America to Formosa in just ten more hours. It was impossible to even imagine. Is it not so? And now with the development of science, everyone takes it for granted. It is no problem. Today to sit on an airplane is just like sitting in a taxi – only it's a little bit longer distance, that's all.

We may enter into a different era, an even higher scientific civilization. We can transcend the space limit and even the dimensions limit, the world dimension. Up to now we have only learned, I think, the third dimension. Is that not so? But there are some ways to know the fourth, the fifth, the sixth... the tenth dimension, etc., if we know how. This kind of transcendental way we can acquire by our own effort with the help of someone who has already known the way.

This is very easy to understand, no? It is just as when you want to become a doctor, you go and find a doctor and a medical school and learn with those who are specialized in the field. And then after some times, some years, you become a doctor.

It is as simple as that. Now, these are the sciences of the world, what we call “earthly sciences” – to make aircraft, to make spaceships, to make automobiles. The best thing is that we learn the Quan Yin Method, the enlightening method. Then we don't need complication, we can communicate from within. In America you will know what the people in Formosa need and you will know how to help them, and that's why many people are interested in becoming enlightened. Inside of us we have the great Power, the great wisdom, and this is what we call “Christ Power,” or “God Power,” or “Buddha Nature.” They are the same thing; it's just that different countries name it differently.

I am glad that you have no discrimination in your mind, that you have come here to listen to me. This means that your hearts are very broad and it is easy to communicate with you. If someone just clings to one religion or another, it makes it difficult for me to communicate. Those who come here are somehow very open-minded, so I feel very relaxed and I feel very close to you, very close. I don't know how you feel. Is it very close? Yes? (*Audience: Yes.*) That's good. That means we have something in the hearts, some affinity.

What made Jesus so great? What made Buddha so famous? What made Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu and Confucius so famous up till now? It was the Power that They have acquired. We all have this Power, I may inform you. My information doesn't give you this Power, my information doesn't make you great; it is you who are already great. It is just that you do not know; it is that you forgot to use it. So, I have the honor to inform you, may you remember it or may you not. It is my duty to inform you, because since I have found it I cannot long for anything else in this world. I am free from any desire. I

think some of you out there in the world will long to have the same kind of joy, the same kind of complete fulfillment of satisfaction, so that you will no longer have this kind of struggle, “I don’t know what is missing. I want to find something but I don’t know what it is.”

We have husbands and wives, money, wealth, positions, everything that society can offer, yet we still feel lonely, we still feel something is not right. This is because we have not found our Home; we have not found this Christ Power within us; we have not found a Heaven within our heart; we have not found our own Buddha Nature. That is what we seek. So I have found it; I thought I must inform you that there is a way which is very easy, very beautiful, and it costs nothing, costs no complications, no changing of any society status or any environment, no shaving of the head. You do not have to look at my head. I was crazy then, (Master laughs) you don't need to do it and you still can find the same Power. But I've already shaved, so I continue to do it, (Laughter) just to show you that we don't need to change anything. Whatever we are, we stay like that. Maybe tomorrow I will feel like growing my hair back. It makes no difference to me or to you, or to the Buddha Nature inside.

Jesus, He found this Power, therefore He was so great. He could heal the sick, open their wisdom-eyes. He could take people back to His Father. Therefore He was great. Buddha also found this Power, and that was why He was a Buddha, “the World-honored one,” the most honorable among humans and gods. I don't mean the greatest God, the Almighty. I mean the smaller gods, the devas. There are greater gods and smaller gods. So He was greatest among gods and men, because He

found the Power. Confucius and Lao Tzu found this Power, and many other more countless beings have found this Power and they became great. Famous or not, it makes no difference. They have found it, and that's it, and that makes them happy; that makes them joyous and almighty.

We are human. Every religion tells us that human are the best, the best kind of being we can get. Even the angels have to bow to human beings – God said so. When God made human beings, Hes told the angels that they had to bow to us, and then one or two did not bow, so God punished them and sent them to hell. That's what we call “Satan,” no? The one with two horns, very ugly.

Actually I have never met Satan, so my description is not very dependable, but I can only tell you about God, about how beautiful Hes is. The Buddhas and angels and fairies, and all the beautiful beings in the cosmos I can tell you, from the beautiful side. The ugly side I've left so long ago, that I might have forgotten what it looks like. If you like, maybe you can go to hell and have a look. (Laughter)

Actually, when we practice this path of so-called the Truth, we can even go to hell, but as a “visitor.” We can go when we want to, not as a prisoner, not as the one who goes to suffer but as the one who comes to bless. If we all go to hell, then all the hells will be immediately empty. We have to go sometimes to rescue our relatives, our disciples, our friends, our husbands and wives, who have gone astray before, before we got initiation. So we must go sometimes. But we are free to come and free to go. The Master will take us there, and take us home.

Now, let's not talk about hell, as it scares everyone to death. We don't often go there, only sometimes. Actually, after

initiation, most of our relatives will be rescued immediately; some almost immediately go to a different sphere to live in happiness. But in case some of them are so heavily obstructed by their own past inner dark thinking of many lives before, they may have to stay there a little bit longer and then we may have to go down ourselves and take them Home.

I think you have read some of Swedenborg, haven't you? He went to hell to rescue some people. Go home and have a look. I haven't even read his works myself. (Master laughs) I don't know from where I learned this information, since I haven't read it. But you may read it, as it is very interesting. He was not the only one. Buddha also went there. And Buddha's disciples, and Jesus and His disciples sometimes went there; and our disciples also went there. When they got back they could tell you something horrible that would give you nightmares. But we don't go there often. If we do not have mission, if we have nothing to do there, we do not go.

We have only to go upward to a higher and glorious world, to be near to our Almighty God. The Ocean of Love and Mercy is what we call God. Hes is not a being, although Hes might manifest Hirmself sometimes as a being to let us feel close, to be able to touch Hirm and communicate with Hirm. Otherwise Hes is only an Ocean of Love and Mercy and Blessing and Compassion. Everything that is good and joyous, that is God. We ourselves at the moment even without initiation, without knowing our innate wisdom, our inborn heavenly Power, we are still God.

Anytime you manifest love toward your neighbor, toward your children, your friends, your relatives or anyone in need, you manifest God. So, the more we manifest this kind

of compassion, love, mercy and wisdom, the more we are near to God. But God in this sense is too limited. We can only love one or two persons and we can only help a handful of people at a time. God, in the ultimate sense, can help the whole world. So this is the goal we strive to achieve. This is what Buddha and Jesus Christ achieved. Actually Christ was not His name. You must know; “Christ” is a title. It is just as “Buddha” was not Shakyamuni's name, but only a title. It is an indication of an enlightened being, an Almighty Power. When we acquire this Power, we become Christ. Maybe there will be a Mary Christ or a Joseph Christ or a Smith Christ. We become different Christs because our names are different.

I think there is a Hebrew name for an enlightened Master, called a “Messiah,” no? It is just as in Sanskrit they call an enlightened Master a Buddha, and now in modern times we call him a “Guru.” This has made everyone confused, “What is the difference between a Guru and a Buddha?” Actually, a real Guru is a Buddha. Buddha means a Guru who is the “darkness remover” and “Light giver.” It means when you associate with this kind of person, he will remove your darkness of ignorance and give you Light.

Therefore Jesus said: *Those who follow me will never walk in darkness.* He said: *I am the Light of the world,* but He added: *as long as I live in the world.* Here is a phrase which our later generations might misunderstand, thinking that He will forever be the Light-giver, so He had to say, *as long as I live in the world, I am the Light of the world.* He did not say, I am forever the Light of the world. He said that: *After I go, I will send Comforter to bring the later generations Home, so do not grieve for me.* This meant that after He died, another

would come. It is like that.

When someone asked Jesus who He was, He said He was an incarnation of those past, so and so, Saints. Was that not so? Sometimes we read the Bible and we quickly forget, or we might overlook this information, and when I talk about it again, it seems like very strange information. But in fact it is there. This is ancient information, not my information.

So, the same, sometimes when I spoke to Buddhist people, they thought I was saying strange things because they thought they had never heard of it before. But I said, "This is stated in the Bible, the Buddhist Bible, and the Buddhist doctrines." So, similarly, sometimes when I talk to you about the Christian Bible you may feel strange, if you don't remember.

Someone asked me that, "In the Buddhist doctrines we have the Law of Birth and Rebirth, and the Law of Karma," karma means the Law of Cause and Retribution, the Law of Cause and Effect, "but Christians do not have these?"

I said, "Yes, Christianity has it, because in the Bible it is said, *As you sow; so shall you reap*. If this is not the Law of Cause and Effect, then what is it?"

I may inform you that the Bible has been censored, cut, and erased for so many times. Much information was not allowed to the public. But as we know, many people made research on Jesus' life and have discovered very startling information for us, but also very useful. Things like this: Jesus was a vegetarian since He was a child. Roman Catholics would not accept this, but the fact is the fact, and history is history. No one can change that. It is just that sometimes the fact and history are so unknown to the people at large, to the majority of humans.

Therefore, when someone says it, it seems like very

strange information, that is all. But if we take time and patience, we will collect for ourselves a vast amount of information heretofore unknown to us. Is it not so? Sometimes in your own working fields you also suddenly discover something new. It is the same with the scientists, who forever discover something new. What is unbelievable today, tomorrow is proved to be very trustworthy.

It is like the story of Galileo. He approved the Heliocentric Theory which was discovered by Copernicus. It caused him the persecution and in duress by the Church at that time. It is just like that. They were so hurried, so impatient, and so inhuman. Sometimes the dogmatic people can cause this kind of disaster because of ignorance. And hundreds of years later we all feel sorry, and for what? We cannot make up for it. We have lost a great talent, a great prophet. I think he did not use the human eyes to look at it, and he might not even use the telescope. What did he use? He used his wisdom-eye to see.

He could only see the Truth, therefore he spoke the Truth. And at that moment if there had been a telescope or any developed science, they could have proved it. But they were not so far advanced, so they killed a nice person, after all. They did not care what kind of level he attained or how much enlightened he was. He was a beautiful, harmless person and they just killed him like that, for nothing!

Now, these people are those that have acquired their inner wisdom, like Jesus and Buddha. They were so far ahead of their time, that people could not stand it – we can just say that way. Is it not so? Therefore, when Buddha was alive, it's not that everyone worshipped Him. There were many people who tried to harm Him, to kill Him, to disparage Him, and to black-

en His name. When Jesus was alive there were, of course, many people who worshipped Him, but there were many others who harmed Him and tried all kinds of tricks to kill Him. Even though the judge knew that Jesus was innocent, he was still powerless against those wicked people.

Similarly, Galileo was also such a great person, a prophet of the time. He was so far advanced that people could not catch up with him. They did not understand his ideas and his wisdom. Therefore we see that science is not always up-to-date. So now what do we do? Follow our own wisdom.

Most scientists keep their brains in active use. They use their brains more than the average persons do. Therefore they discover and invent so many kinds of apparatus. They can invent many things to add to our comfort, but what they use is just a little bit of the wisdom that our Father, God, has given us since the day of our births.

Now, there is the way to use our complete wisdom, and it is so easy that everyone can do it. If I can do it, such a small person who weighs only seventy plus pounds, then surely you who are so great and big and tall will be able to use even more. This is our hope for the future, because we cannot always rely on “material science,” we have to also rely on this kind of “spiritual science,” which brings us so much far in advance into “the world beyond the world.” This will give us joy and meaning to our existence.

I think, more or less, most of us wonder what human existence is for. Why is it that God makes us to live only for 100 years and then lets us die? It seems a waste of time. We could imagine if we lived longer, a few hundred or a few thousand years, we would accomplish more. No? Yes. Truly it is so.

There is a way to live longer, but not in this body. We have to live longer in a different body. There are some bodies which can endure several hundred years; there are some bodies which can endure several thousand years; there are some kinds of bodies which can endure several millions of years; and there is some body which can live forever. That body is the wisdom body and we have to use a wisdom method to achieve it. Just as we use a medical method to achieve a medical doctor's degree, we use this wisdom method to achieve our wisdom body.

With this wisdom body we fear no fire, no water, no disaster of any kind, and we feel no pain whatsoever. I have no words in human language which I can think of to truly convey to you, my brothers and sisters, this greatness of our wisdom, of our Christ Power inborn within us. This is what we call the "Heaven within" – *Lo and behold, the Heaven is within*. Everyone knows that. But then you may ask, "What is Heaven? And where is it – 'within'? And what does the Heaven do to me when I carry it around twenty-four hours every day? What could it do to me? What is its use for me? What is the use of this Heaven within me, when I am miserable every day? I struggle in this meaningless world and I have to deal with all kinds of vexations and jealousies from inside and outside. What is the use of your talking to me about this Heaven?"

Yes, I would agree with you. It is of no use. Only if we know it, we possess it and make use of it, then it becomes useful. Otherwise you can carry it a hundred, a thousand, a million, a billion years and it makes you nothing more than just a human or a lion or a worm or a tiger – be what you may. This is why we have to know this Heaven, that I have to come all this way to inform you that you may know your own treasure.

Whether you believe me or not, I just rely on your wisdom. It is easy to believe because one has the proof.

After one gets initiation, immediately he has the proof and every day more proofs. Every minute there is more proof. Every second you live in a different world, with a different mental outlook. The world itself does not change – my friend just said to you that the environment didn't change; she changed.

Yes, because we cannot change the world. It doesn't matter how advanced our civilization is, it doesn't matter how much material comfort we have, we all feel the same misery. Is it not so? We still have to deal with our vexation, and happiness money cannot buy. Therefore we read newspapers, we watch television and see so many millionaires commit suicide. So many great people cannot bear the burden of this world and end their lives in tragedy. This is because they forget their everlasting treasure, they rely only upon their ephemeral treasure. Therefore Jesus said: ***Lay not your treasure on Earth, where the moth and rust can corrupt, but lay your treasure in Heaven where it is forever lasting.*** He meant that you should find your own treasure, the everlasting treasure, and you can always draw from this source and always have a supply.

Therefore, this is an infinite blessing. I say it again and again, and I have no words to advertise for it. I can only praise it and I can only hope you believe my praise. I can only hope that my so-called “radiation” – my energy, my magnetic field – and my sincerity will somehow affect your heart and lift you up to that kind of joyous feeling, and then you could somehow believe. And after initiation you can truly know the meaning of my words. Now I am only advertising for the “cookies,” and the “cookies” you have not tasted. Anyhow they are free

of charge.

I don't know what else I can do. If you tell me to come and sweep your house to prove it that I am sincere, I will gladly do. If you tell me to shine your shoes to prove my selfless service, I will do immediately. I have no way to convey to you this great blessing which God has bestowed on me, which I have the right to distribute. He doesn't only give it to me, He also gives me the right – He allows me to distribute the same to everyone who comes along, and free of charge, free of any conditions, of any taint of material desire.

Now, I think we have made some communication. Is it not so? Have you felt something of my sincerity? I will answer your questions. Any questions you might have I will answer gladly.

Before encountering this method, I had not practiced, I had not got in touch with this great blessing of wisdom. I had tried many kinds of things, I did many kinds of social work. I felt obliged to help those in need just as some of you here would do. But then, the more I helped, the busier I became, and the less I felt enough..... It seems that the more you help, the more people need; it seems that your time and energy are so limited, and the world is so vast. So many people are suffering, and you alone, or even hundreds of you, cannot help that many people.

Then, I was thinking, “What did Jesus do, that He could help so many people? What did the Buddha do, that people said He could be anywhere at the same time?” I was thinking very hard and then I thought, “This won't do, because I am very small in stature and my energy is limited. I could only do so much and then I collapsed. So what did the Buddha do that

He didn't collapse and He helped so many people?"

I read the Sutra, the Buddhist doctrines (Sutra is a Sanskrit name for doctrines, Scriptures). I read that the Buddha could use His transcendental body to appear at any place and at any time. In Christian terminology we call it omnipotence, omnipresence. Is that not so? Yes. So you see Buddhists and Christians speak about the same thing. Even in Hinduism they talk about omnipresence. It means that while you are here, you are also anywhere else at the same time, at any time. That is what omnipresence means.

Now, can we acquire this omnipresent status? Yes we can. Buddha could, Jesus could, then you also can, and someone else here also can. I would not mention it. Can you guess who? Ah yes, I am sure you can guess. I would not say it; it is embarrassing.

If we just imagine that someone can be omnipresent. Can you imagine? Isn't that so great? Yes, it is. We think only Buddha and Jesus could do it, and we think only Buddha appeared only once in every million of times, and Jesus came only once in many lifetimes. This is not logical. It is just as in any era, in any period of time, there are people who suffer from illnesses and thus in any period of time there have to be physicians to heal their sicknesses.

Since ancient times human beings have suffered from mental dissatisfactions. This is a kind of illness. Sickness in our physical bodies is easy to heal. Is it not so? We take pills, we have an operation or an injection and we are OK. But the mental suffering no one can heal, the everyday vexation that life presses on us no one can lift up. Therefore, if Jesus only offered His faith and offered His blessings once in billions

of times – in fact, most people believe He came only that one time – that is an underestimation of God's mercy.

(Master sniffs and says) This is what civilization brings me – air conditioning and cigarettes. (Laughter) I lived in Formosa in the countryside, in the open air. We all live in tents and our “temple” is also a tent. We do not waste money and make a lot of noise to build a temple. We live in the open air. And now I am stuck in this air-conditioned, smoke-filled platform jumbo jet and I immediately get a cold. This is civilization's advantage. (Laughter)

So, actually, don't look at my example. Looking at me and seeing that I am so small, so skinny and sick, you'll think that to practice this method has no use. But it has all kinds of uses – except after becoming a Master then you have no use, because if you are a Master you can give only, you cannot take. That's the difference. Your disciples are very comfortable, enjoying all kinds of joy, happiness and blessing, but the Master has to suffer. That is why we say Jesus came to uplift humankind and to cleanse their sins, and He Himself had to be crucified, He Himself could not enjoy any privilege, and therefore people scolded Him, criticized Him, and crucified Him.

Buddha was also the same. He also suffered from illness and from people's criticism and all kinds of petty things. So don't be scared. Once you learn this method you are protected a hundred percent by the God Power, whereas the Master is an exception. The Master must endure all kinds of suffering, and that's the difference. The Master alone has to suffer, but everyone else can enjoy. This is the price of being parents – the children enjoy all comforts. Is it not so? And the parents must work hard to provide all things and take all responsibility. Now, we

do not complain to be parents, so one should not complain to be any kind of Master. The real Master has to suffer.

Why is this, when someone acquires this inner Power, he can become omnipresent? This occurs because he is connected with the whole universe. So, in the Chinese Taoism they say, “Wang Wu Tung Yi Ti,” meaning “You and the universe are one”; or as Christ put it: ***I and my Father are one***. What does “the Father” mean? It means the cause of the whole existence, the parents of all beings. If you are one with the Father, it means you are one with the whole cosmos, you achieve this state of enlightenment, of the higher level of consciousness.

Now, enlightenment doesn't mean you go around with a Light on your face – but it could happen. People will see you with a Light around if they have their wisdom-eyes open. We see paintings or figures of Jesus and Buddha and all Saints have the halo around them. That is the Light. So actually that's exactly what it means by enlightenment – because it has Light. There is Light, but this Light we cannot use our normal mental eyes to discern. We have to use the wisdom-eye, or the third eye, the God's eye, the Buddha's eye, the Tao's eye, or Jehovah's eye (Master laughs) – whatever name they call it. So many religions have made different names, so we are confused.

How to acquire this eye, and how to acquire this Light? This is the purpose of my coming to you tonight. I would like to share with you the simple way to attune yourself with this God Power, or Christ Power, or Buddha's Power. Then you will become Christ, you will become Buddha, you will become “you and your Father are one” just like Jesus.

Jesus did not say that He alone was the son. He said all beings are Father's children. The Bible says: ***God made humans in***

Hiers own image. This means that not only Jesus, but we are also likened to God. It is only that at His time He alone and His few disciples realized it, because it took time and practice to discover our own great level, our own great status in the universe.

We have not done so, therefore we are ignorant of our greatness and we are walking around on the street like beggars. Oh, I'm sorry, I don't mean you are beggars. What I mean is, comparing to our own inborn greatness we are really beggars, we are even worse than beggars. If we only know how great we are, we will feel very sorry for our previous ignorance. This is why Jesus was so diligent, running from one place to another to tell people: ***You are sons of God, you can be God, you can find Heaven; Lo and behold, Heaven is within you.*** You can find Heaven now.

And Buddha also ran around for forty-nine years, keeping telling people: ***Everyone can become Buddha, everyone has Buddha Nature.*** But very few people listened to Him. Why is that so? Because we are so kept in our own habits, in our environmental effects, and we forgot. We cannot imagine there is anything else beyond this world. We cannot believe there is anything which can bring us more happiness than our money, cars, our homes, our husbands and wives and kids and all this. The world bows us down to this level of understanding. They want us to understand that, only that, and nothing else.

And we are busy every day, so we have no time to think. Sometimes it flashes in our minds very quickly, "Oh yes, yes. What is it? What is it? What is life for? What is it? I want to know Heaven, I want to know God. How to know it?" And then the next minute the kids come and say, "Mummy I want this, I want that," or the husband comes and two of you fight, and

that's it, Heaven is gone. (Loud laughter) The next minute you completely forget about Heaven, and God is thrown in the dust bin. You don't know Hirm anymore. You only know your vexation, and you know how to argue, how to lash your husband or your wife, telling them to shut up. Then you are so vexed and you go and turn on the television and you laugh with the comedians and then that's it, that's our Heaven. (Laughter)

It is a pity with this day-to-day life. We don't need the TV to become happy. We don't need the comedians to laugh. We can laugh every day within ourselves if we know where Heaven is and how to discover it and how to use our treasure every day. And not only can we use it, we can distribute it. Someone who knows Heaven within radiates a kind of soothing, beautiful, blessing energy around him or her, which can make everyone else around just have a look and feel happy, trusting, assured, very friendly, and have a very close, comforted feeling.

Therefore, Jesus after He acquired this Power could loudly and proudly say: ***Come to me, all ye who are heavy laden and tired, and I will quicken you.*** Yes, He meant He could do that. He did not boast; He told the truth. And may I repeat that again here, the same thing, because I don't do anything different than Jesus. We have the same mission. I understand that this gives you a shock, but if I don't tell this to you, what else can I say? What am I here for?

I think actually I am ashamed to say that so quickly; I meant to leave it. But I think it is my personality. I am too straight forward. Sometimes I cannot conceal the things and I forget. Sometimes I am not flexible enough, often giving people a shock. (Master laughs) I just hit like a bomb and people

cannot accept it. (Laughter) But never mind. Whatever has to be said is God's ordination, and if He means you to go Home, then you will go Home. If your wisdom is open enough, you will believe whatever I say; and when it is not open enough, whatever I say will make no meaning for you. Is it not so? Even when Jesus was alive, many people did not believe Him. So who am I to expect greater faith?

Today is the first day and I was thinking how I would make friends, how I would make you feel that we have been longtime friends. And then I was thinking that I had no need to do that because God's Power within us will unite us together. The language is only a very small, convenient, expedient means. It makes not much difference. Most of the time great Masters did not use language to convert people; they used their eyes and their energy, the radiance. As I've just told you minutes before, someone who acquires this Christ Power will radiate a kind of assurance, a kind of trustworthy atmosphere that makes people believe what he says and makes them feel very comfortable. Even your touch and your eyes will heal many people's sickness if you have this Power.

Jesus did not use magical power. People thought He used magical power but He did not. He Himself was a magic power. Anyone who came in contact with Him would get benefit, get blessing, get healed, and get joy. It's like that. Even His disciples had this kind of blessing Power.

Today, in the car again, we were speaking of the benefits disciples derive from practicing this Quan Yin Method. What is "Quan Yin" (Chinese)? It means you contemplate the inner Vibration, the inner Music. I cannot say it's Music, and then I cannot say it is not, and yet I cannot say it is a Vibration. I

don't know what it is in language.

In the Bible it is called “the Word,” “the Sound,” “the Vibration.” It says: ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... and everything that was made by this Word, and nothing that was made was not made by this Word.*** Word means Sound, Vibration, inner Music, celestial Music. This Vibration we cannot use human ears to hear or any kind of our human senses, means to touch it or to grasp. We have to use our inner sense, the inner sense from the inner Man. The inner Man is the Real Man; it is not the body, it is the one who inhabits this body. That is our Real Self.

When we hear this inner Wisdom or inner Vibration, it means that our inner Self has been awakened. So when we say someone experiences a great awakening, it means exactly like that. Who is awakened? “Every day our eyes are so big open and we are not awakened? You must be joking.” No, I am not joking. We are not awakened. We are awakened only when we are enlightened, when our inner Self awakens. Now it is sleeping, therefore we cannot experience the inner world or the blessing from God or from Heaven.

We are in this world, living, swimming, and suffering in this material, physical, mortal world. So, we are “dead.” I am sorry to shock you again. We are alive again when we are awakened, when we experience the awakening from within, when our Real Man, our Real Person awakens. The prince will come and give us a kiss of life and we will awaken, and that is the moment of awakening, which is called enlightenment; both are the same thing.

Now, why did I say we are “dead”? Because we have eyes but we don't see much – we only see from here to there.

Because we have ears but we don't hear much – we can only hear a little bit, in a short distance and we don't hear the celestial Music, don't see the heavenly abode. So we are blind, deaf and dumb.

This is a pity. We have great Eye, great Ear. We can hear thousand miles, we can hear from here to Formosa; we can see from here to Germany; we can see from here to Heaven and to hell, and we don't use it. So we call ourselves deaf and dumb and dead. It's like that. We know only a limited space of time, we can walk only about twenty miles and then we collapse. So we have no power. We can see only a little bit and we can be awake only for a certain amount of hours and then we have to close our eyes and sleep.

There is a Person who never sleeps, who doesn't need to sleep, to eat, or to do anything, and he knows everything, hears everything, sees everything. This is our True Self, what we call God, Christ Power or Buddha Nature. We have to awaken that Person, and that's called awakening. After we awaken that Person, we will be omnipresent; and slowly, slowly we will become: ***I and my Father are one***. We will know everything without knowledge, we will see everything without looking, we will hear everything without listening.

Therefore in the Bible it says: ***Hearing you hear, but you do not understand. Seeing you see, but you do not perceive.*** That's the meaning that I have just been explaining to you. Why is that "hearing and not understanding," or "seeing and not perceiving"? It is because our seeing is not really seeing, is illusion. The real world is beyond our physical eyes, the real world is beyond our physical ears. We have to awaken the Real Self in order to experience, to perceive the real world. This is what the

Bible means by: *seeing you see, but you don't perceive*.

After awakening we are connected with the whole cosmos, with the whole universe, and then we are no longer walking alone; we walk with God Power. We are connected like a network, just as we are connected together by radio and television networks or telephone networks. Just dial a number and everyone knows what happens, or just broadcast some news and the whole world knows what's happening in Formosa or what's happening in America. This is a physical network, and we have a finer, subtler, more superior network, which we call "co-worker with God," "co-worker with the cosmos," "co-worker with Buddha." This is what we call "becoming Buddha," becoming the all-knowing, Almighty, the Omnipresent.

Then you can stay here talking and at the same time appear in whatever country is in need of your manifestation. This is called omnipresence. Then you can sit there listening to me, and at the same time have many transcendental bodies and going to different places to help people who call you for help. This is omnipresence, is a great goal which we should set before us, which we can achieve – and very easy. By devoting ourselves with about one tenth of our everyday time we can achieve that inner chamber in a short while. Even if we don't achieve this omnipresent status, we can achieve a great Power and great benefit for ourselves, our relatives, our friends and our countries. We can radiate Light to heal others and many miseries in the world – can help many people.

One of my disciples is a doctor. He is very young, just graduated and having no experience about surgery. But any time he operated anyone, that one was sure to recover within a few days, and these people normally had no more hope. To-

day we were talking about this in the car. That doctor is the son of one of my disciples – now in Formosa and very young with little experience in surgery. A new born doctor, normally he was not allowed to do any independent operation, but in many desperate cases people were on the waiting list to death, so they didn't bother and he could try. And he tried and the patients went home in two or three days. These people actually were very desperate, such as the patients with lungs that were filled with water.

Anytime this doctor “touched” any person, that person immediately went home. So other doctors said, “H-how do y-y-y-you do this?” He didn't know how either. This is just a very small aspect of this Christ Power, the God Power that I mean to convey to you, that you yourself have – not that I will give it to you or anyone can give it to you. God gave it to us; we are born with it.

God is so merciful that when Hes sent us into this world, Hes was worried that Hiers children might be in want. So Hes provided us with everything inside. It's just we forgot how to use it, then we come here and we feel so lonely, so helpless and powerless and we are miserable, we are unhappy.

Therefore the happiest person in the world is not really happy, if he does not know where his real happiness, his everlasting happiness lies. That's why everyone has some kind of frustrated feeling that, “Something is missing but I don't know what it is.” It doesn't matter how much money we have or how beautiful our husbands and wives are, we still feel somehow not completely satisfied.

One of my disciples mentioned today that she is now fully happy inside. She felt very satisfied, and I said, “I am happy

for you. Even though you don't practice very well, you are not very diligent, but you still have so much benefit." She said that formerly she used to have headaches every day and felt dizzy – the whole body was not in order. But after initiation, of course she kept a vegetarian diet, now she is so healthy. Therefore her whole family completely supports her. Thanks to God, she manifested some sort of physical benefit. Otherwise no one could tell of her inner benefit.

This example is only a physical manifestation, and it is so little as that, and even though she didn't practice. She's a lousy practitioner, I may say. (Master laughs) So I could say that I was happy for her. Even her devotion was lousy, she could have so much benefit. Then, do not doubt a person who devoted completely his body, speech and mind wholeheartedly for God, for the Path, for the Prophet, will certainly get the healing Power, the whole benefit of God's blessing, and then can give it to others. There is no doubt about that.

Anyway, the physical benefit is not what we are looking for. It is not worth our intention. What I mean is, even a fraction, a small fraction of this Power can change so much in our lives, in our environment, and anyone who comes in touch with us, that we are so puzzled if this kind of Power really exists.

This is nearly the 21st century and we are in a very scientific era. When I talk about this kind of thing many people may think I am talking a fairy tale. Therefore it is difficult to convey our message to the world at large, however much I am in patience to do so and however much my disciples are excited to do so. They still have to be patient and play down. This is very pitiful, but there is no remedy for it. Even when Jesus was there

He did not save many people; not many people followed Him. Buddha was also the same; not many people followed Him. Only after They died did They become more famous.

Why? Is it easier to worship a dead Master? It's true, because he has no words. (Laughter) Whatever you want to believe, he will not correct you; whatever your false faith is, he will not scold you or hurt your ego. That is the meaning of that. So after the Masters died everyone came and worshipped, making a big deal, a show and everything. But when the Master was alive, it was difficult.

It's hard to survive, let alone to transmit any power or any doctrine. Therefore, in Chinese we say, "Since ancient times the real Master's life is very delicate, fragile, easy to be broken down." The life of a Master is very dangerous because they are so ahead of their times that whatever they talk, the majority will not understand and will not be able to accept. Just like Galileo.

Also, in China, in ancient times most Masters had to hide themselves. They taught only a small discrete group of disciples; they dared not go to the public. The more famous the Master, the more difficult to get this Master, to be near him. So, in ancient times the Master was very far out of reach, and the communication and transportation were not as good as our present times. Therefore in ancient times the disciples much treasured the Master's teaching because it was very difficult to get, even just one line of it.

In our present time there are more advantages in transportation and communication, but then it also requires the public karmic affinities. You have to sow a lot of good deeds together in order to make a good atmosphere to lift up our

mental understanding, our own consciousness to accept something new, something that we have not been able to understand before, we have not heard about before. This is also difficult. The transportation and communication do not mean anything that can help us. It only helps us a little bit, it can bring me from Formosa to here. But then the acceptance has to come from people's mentalities, from their own levels of understanding, and their own levels of consciousness.

Now, everyone has different levels of consciousness. Therefore a doctor thinks differently than a garbage collector, or an engineer thinks differently from a taxi driver, or maybe like that. From the outer appearance both of them look the same – a taxi driver and a doctor both look the same except when they wear uniforms – but inside there are different knowledge. The taxi driver doesn't know much about medicines or how to cure a person's sickness, but the doctor does. Some doctors are so good that they can just look at your face or your eyes and know where your sickness is. Some Chinese doctors just feel your pulse, and some even better, they just look at you and they know where your sickness is, with no need to feel your body or to diagnose or hear your heart or anything like that. So this is a different degree in the same field even. The same with average people. Everyone has different thinking because of different backgrounds, different previous lives' backgrounds, different education and different environmental effects.

So, it is no doubt for us to accept easily the fact that someone is more intelligent than someone else. There are even some with great intelligence, and that is very easy to understand. These great intelligent people are those like Jesus

Christ, Buddha, Confucius and all those ancient Masters.

Now, if we can accept that these ancient famous ones were great in wisdom, then we can also accept that at present there are some also the same, because we human beings do not change. Since ancient times we have a nose here, and two eyes there, and a mouth in the middle. Maybe your skins are white and mine is yellow, but in general we are the same. In the Western and Eastern since old there have been many Masters such as Socrates, Plato and many more. We can name only a few because most of them, I can assure you, were not famous because they hid themselves. They even had not enough time to hide themselves, let alone to be famous. Only Jesus was famous. Why? Because they crucified Him and gave Him advertisement, free advertisement. (Laughter) Yes. So the price is that up to now, two thousand years later, people still know His name. And Buddha, because He was a prince, He had a noble lineage, people already knew Him before He became Buddha. Of course everyone wanted to come and learn with a prince who had become enlightened. He had already the advantage of a noble being. So both of Them were a little famous.

Confucius went from one nation, from one king to another, advertising his doctrine, and some of the kings and high government officials believed him and made him famous. Once you associate with this kind of high society, you will very quickly become famous. Isn't it so? If they believe you, they promote you. Especially in ancient times the kings and government officials were all there were in the world – they held destinies in their hands. Other people were not so famous because they were not known to the public, though worshipped by their

circles of disciples. If they didn't leave any doctrines behind or even if they didn't desire to leave their teachings behind, then we would not know. Even if some of their collected works are left behind, it is not necessarily to be saved with the time. Is it not so? Things have become destroyed and burned, and all kinds of disasters will befall this kind of enlightened persons.

The Tao, The Sound, The Word

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
May 25, 1989
San Francisco, CA, U.S.A.
(Originally in English)

Good evening, brothers and sisters. I am happy to see you again and that out of your busy schedule you have reserved some time for me. Some of the brothers from yesterday have come back. This means that yesterday's lecture was not so boring! (Laughter)

It is like this: the Truth we all know; we just forgot. So sometimes someone has to remind us and make us remember again what is the purpose of our life and why we have to find

the Truth, why we must practice; and why we must believe in God or Buddha or whoever we think is the highest Power of the universe.

When Buddha was still alive, He often spoke to His disciples about the importance of self-discipline and practicing self-realization. Now the disciplines we all know. In all the Scriptures are mentioned these things, such as non-violence, loving thy neighbor, loving thy enemies, etc., and leading a very pure and very virtuous life. The problem is that when we confront them with reality, the pressure of society, it is difficult for us to “love thy enemy” or to “love thy neighbor.” But actually, we are not to be blamed for it. It is because we are so helpless and so powerless against the mass influences of societies and the pressure of living nowadays.

Now, why is it that we could not keep the ancient discipline left down by the ancient Masters? It is not because we do not want to or that we don't make any effort to do so. It is because we do not have enough power; we are tired, weary of existence. Sometimes we must work hard just to survive in this ever-growing standard of civilization, and then we also face even more “civilized” temptation. Before, temptations were not so “civilized.” Now it is a more civilized society, so you have more “civilized” temptations. (Master laughs) So we should make a more civilized approach to guard ourselves if we want to regain our self-respect and self-wisdom and self-right, because sometimes it looks like we're lost in the whirlpool of existence, of the pressure, and we seem to lose ourselves. It is not that we lose our bodies or our desires, it is just that we lose our self-control; and self-control is so important to us that we should pay attention to it.

So in the Bible it is said: *What benefit is there for a man who gains the whole world and loses himself?* Now, we all know about this phrase and we probably repeat it many times, but we do not know what it means by “losing ourselves.” We are thinking, “Why? I’ve not lost anything. I am just gaining every day.”

If you get a promotion from your boss or the business is running really well, or you get more children each year, you call this your promotion. But this is not gaining; this is more of a lovely burden only. Some burdens are unbearable and some are lovely. So we love it. The more position we gain and the more children, more money, the more burdens; we lose ourselves more in taking care of these material things. What is it to lose ourselves? The more we're steeped in these material surroundings, the less we know ourselves. This is called losing ourselves.

What should we know about ourselves? That we are the greatest beings in the universe.

Everyone tells us from the Buddhist Bible that human life is the most precious, and the Catholics also say the same, and then in the Muslim Scriptures it is said that we are guests on Earth only. So this means that our Home is not here. It means we are greater than just the human shell of the body.

Now then, everyone tells us that we are so great, but where is our greatness? What is so great about human existence? At most we know our greatness only through our mortal understanding. For example, what kind of position we have in our company measures our greatness, or in society how successful we are is how people measure our greatness. That is the most we can judge how great a person is, from our human point of view.

Then, if we think carefully, these things are not permanent. Even, excuse me for saying, the presidency is not forever for anyone to hold. Though the presidency is the highest, the most prestigious position in a nation, but still you cannot hold it forever. So many millionaires, so many famous persons have gone out of sight and we do not know where they have gone. We can know where they went to if we practice the method laid down by ancient and present real Masters, who all have taught one and the same method. Whoever says that he preaches the Truth, then he really must teach the same method. That is, the method which helps one to realize how great one is and what is the relationship between us and our Father – God, or the so-called Buddha Nature, or the Tao.

These different names from different religions indicate the same Power: the Almighty, the Ever-present, Everlasting, All-love and Mercy. This is what we call God, or the Most High, the Almighty, the Tao, or the Buddha Nature, or the Ju Lai, Tathagata.

Why is it that many people call this Power by different names? It is because of the different traditions and the different ways of expressing; it is also because of the language barrier and that people do not often translate the real meaning into the local language. For example, everyone knows Buddha and thinks He was the only one Buddha. No, this is only a title for an enlightened Saint. You may even call Him Christ. Christ is a title for an enlightened being in the Hebrew language, and we don't translate it into our English language and we keep calling Him Christ, or Buddha; and then we think that there were only two famous Saints and They were the only ones in the world, who ever have come, and who ever will come. So

here we confuse ourselves.

In modern times we have other words, like “Guru.” Now everyone becomes a Guru, even I myself. (Master and everyone laugh) I was so surprised to see on television, “Guru Ching Hai is coming” and I said to myself, “Jesus, now I am becoming a Guru.” (Laughter) It is good for the Americans because they are now acquainted with the term “Guru.” If the television or the newspaper said, “Ching Hai Fa Shih,” the Chinese title for a Guru, people would shake their heads and not understand and say, “What is that – ‘Fa Shih’?” Or if they used the Sanskrit title, “Ching Hai Buddha,” then people would say, “No, there is only one Buddha in India and He died over 2000 years ago,” and then people would fight, thinking I’m boasting myself to be a Buddha.

Actually, to become a Buddha is nothing so terribly out of reach. It is just as you learn for many years to become a doctor, so you can learn for many years and in many ways to become a Buddha. So do not make a big deal about becoming a Buddha and then make a small deal about ourselves. That is unfair and very self-detrimental, self-disrespecting, because Buddha also said we all can become Buddha and we all have Buddha Nature. That means that we and He are equal. The only difference is that He discovered His Buddha Nature, meaning His inner treasure, and we haven’t. Some of you may have, because yesterday I disclosed to you how to find your inner Buddha Nature and some of you have found some part of it. So that is the way to become a Buddha. It is so simple and so scientific; nothing mysterious, and nothing hush-hush, impossible to be reached by the average person.

But why is it that we have heard so little about the meth-

od of how to become a Buddha? The first reason is that we are so cheated into believing that the only Buddha was Shakyamuni, was Gautama Siddhartha the prince. We are made to believe this way. Similarly, we are made to believe that Jesus was the only Christ on Earth and there was no one before, and no one after Him. But Jesus Himself declared that before Him there were other prophets and He Himself was in fact the reincarnation of those ancient ones. In the researches about Jesus we have read about this.

And Buddha also said the same. Before Him there were countless, numerous Buddhas, as many as the Ganges sand. Didn't He say so? Yes. Are you not Buddhists? No? Well, then never mind about the Buddhas. (Laughter) We're talking about our own Buddha for your reference, for your information. You have no need to believe in Buddhism or any "ism"; just believe in your own innate Heaven.

The Bible says: *Heaven is within us*. I have found it and you also may. It is easier to verify the Heaven within us than to blow your nose. To blow your nose you have to first find a piece of tissue, and if there is no tissue there is difficulty; while to find Heaven within is a matter of seconds and minutes.

I have just told you the reason why we haven't heard so much about Buddha's teachings or Jesus Christ, and that the majority of people cannot believe that they can become Christ, that they can become Buddha. It is because we are made to believe we are so ignorant, we are so stupid, we are so small, so helpless; we are nothing, we are sinful, and we are such and such. And we are nothing at all, absolutely. And then from generation to generation we are brainwashed, forced into this kind of false belief.

But we forgot the Bible says that *All beings are God's creation* and *God made humans in Hiers own image*. This means that we and God are the same. When Jesus said: *I and my Father are one*, it means we and the Father also are one. If we can realize this, all of our misery will disappear. This is a simple thing.

But to realize these things is not a matter of talking and believing that I say so; you must take some self-training. This is a kind of self-hypnotism. Some people can hypnotize themselves into doing something, or someone can hypnotize someone else into doing something out of his own control. But this kind of hypnotism is not of a very high order because when you are out of the trance you come back again to your ordinary misery, trouble, vexation, ignorance, and it's even worse. You lose some of your self-control under the hypnotist's influence. So I would not think it is a very advisable thing to do.

The self-hypnotism of the highest order is that, you use your own judgment and own wisdom to acquaint yourself with the higher realms of existence; and you become more and more familiar with higher kinds of living, higher kinds of thinking and higher kinds of power, that you become greater every day. Then your own inner Power will accomplish whatever you want to accomplish for you. At that time we know God and we can say God has accomplished everything for us, through our body, because at that time we and God are one. As Jesus said: *I and my Father are one*. Then we have no more human loneliness and struggle to achieve something by our small power and limited wisdom.

The scientists have used only a limited part of their brains and can accomplish so much. If we used the whole of

our really intricate brain system, of course we could accomplish more. This is nothing difficult to believe but the question of how to use it. There is a way to use it; however, because it's very difficult for the ancient Masters to move about, due to transportation and communication problems, in the ancient times most of the people were ignorant of their teachings and the liberating way.

And now we have a lot of good communication, transportation advantages to enable us to convey the message easily. But then I've found that humans are mostly the same – very skeptical and self-doubting. Not doubting the Master but doubting themselves. Whenever you doubt a Master or his words, know that you are doubting yourselves. Doubting that you could ever become a Buddha; doubting that how could you ever become as great as Christ because you are so small and helpless; doubting that if Christ had been the only one commissioned on Earth by God; doubting that God is so merciful that each era He has sent a son or daughter to bring you Home. This is the great doubt of the humankind. It's not that they doubt the teacher or the teaching or the method; it's that they doubt themselves, because they've been so let down, so put down, so looked down upon for hundreds, billions of years, from one incarnation after another; and that they've been brainwashed into believing that they are nothing, that they are merely sinful beings and they could never become anything good!

This was not the teaching of Jesus. On the contrary Jesus said: *Whatever I can do today you can do also*. No? Didn't He say so? Yes, He did. What does that mean? He did not say He was the only one who could do all those miracles, preaching,

and liberating works. He said that you could do the same, you might even do better. This is what He taught, but we forgot all about that. We believe what the church, the priests tell us, that we are sinful and without Jesus we'll go to hell. (Master laughs) If Jesus were to come back again He would cry His soul out because His teachings have been distorted and tortured into such a sense, such a shape. And He did cry, He does cry, He is crying.

Some of my disciples have been meditating and contacting with Jesus inside. He is now not on the Earth plane; He works in the higher dimensions, that's all. Jesus never died – only His body disappeared from the Earth; but His soul body is everlasting. He is always existing. He is only working in another dimension with people of a higher intelligence, easier to teach than us. I'm sorry to be so straight-forward, but that is what He told me. Anyhow, I'm sorry, you don't need to believe that. It's difficult to tell the truth sometimes. You must forgive me. So, my disciples meditated, and because they were born Catholics, the Catholics believers, they naturally may have contact with Jesus or Mary.

Two weeks ago, when I was still in Formosa, one of them came to me and told me that Jesus was crying, and I asked, “Why is that?”

She said, “Because He thought His children believing in His name were going down to the lower scale of existence. They only believed in His name without knowing the way to reach Him, therefore they got no liberation. So He cried because of His children's ignorance and because of the harm which the false beliefs had done to them.”

Of course, when I heard this I also wanted to cry; my tears did not flow out, but only flow inside and that was even

more painful. Because I don't know what else I can do to fulfill His left-behind mission for Him so that He would stop crying.

You see, once you leave this physical world, even if you are a very high Master, you cannot help the physical beings any more but through an inner communication, which is very difficult to reach by most human beings save some exceptional persons who have the inborn nature of telepathy; or who are left with some psychic power or the inner communication ability through their own previous life's practice. We might call this the sixth, and seventh sense, the highest dimension of understanding. Then you may even be able to see Jesus without practicing or any prior meditation. Some of them are very receptive, and when they are at the sincerest moment praying to Jesus, they might contact Him now and again, or they might contact Buddha or Saints of the past. It has happened, but not very often. But if we practice our method it is very sure we can see these Saints and learn from them a great deal of things. This is how we learn more about the Truth – not by the words of mouth, not by any preaching or doctrines, but by self-intuition, self-learning.

When we go into a higher dimension we will see different saintly beings of the higher order of intelligence. They might have gone to the higher worlds to teach others or they might be prepared to teach us in the near future. They have a greater intelligence, more scientific wisdom than us. They live in a higher world, a so-called better civilization, which we cannot imagine with our own limited human brain. We can only perceive when we go within by meditation, by contemplation, and this we can offer you through the Quan Yin Method, the method of immediate enlightenment.

You have heard a lot about enlightening methods, and I do agree that there are a few ways to enlightenment, but there is only one highest road. You may go by different ways, but you must go through this one to go up. This way is through the inner Light and the inner Vibration. The Vibration, as I told you yesterday, is what the Bible calls “the Word”: ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*** And in the Tao Te Ching it is called: ***the Name you cannot name***, which is the Word in the Bible, the Shabd (Sound) in the Hindu Scriptures and the Quan Yin (the Sound-hearing) in the Buddhist canons.

In the Buddhist Scriptures Buddha said that the best and only way to reach Buddhahood is through contemplating the inner Sound, the Sound Stream. But in the Bible it doesn't say how to contemplate; it only says you must “go within and listen to the inner Sound,” which implies the same as “Fan Wen Wen Tzu Hsing” (Chinese) in Buddhism, meaning listening to your own Nature by turning your hearing inward. So we are confused as to what our own Nature is. If we refer to the Bible it is very easy to understand. When we refer to both, back and forth, then we can understand each other very quickly.

What is our own Nature, our Self-Nature? It means what we are born from. Is that not so? Just as the nature of this table is wood. The table is made of wood and that means its nature is wood. We can say so and it is understandable for everyone. But now, what is our Self-Nature? If Buddha told us to go within and listen to the Self-Nature, or the Sound Stream, that means our Self-Nature is a kind of Sound, a kind of Vibration. Then, in the Bible it also says: ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.***

So, this Sound, this Word is our Self-Nature, because *everything was made by this Word and nothing that is made is not made by this Word.*

We know from the Bible that everything was made by the Vibration, by this Word or Sound, or inner Vibration. And Buddha said the same: *Listen to your own Self-Nature by turning your hearing inward.* Now, to turn your hearing inward and hear your own Self-Nature there must be some Sound to hear; otherwise He would tell you to turn your toe inward and feel your own Nature, or turn your hand inside and scratch your own Nature, no? (Laughter) No, He said: *Turn your hearing inward and hear your Self-Nature.* And the Bible neither says that you are made of anything. It says: *everything was made by this Word.*

The Word is something which sounds, something which vibrates. Because of the language barrier sometimes we use it all differently. In the old, ancient language “Word” means vibration, that’s all.

In the Tao Te Ching, Lao Tzu said: *It is the Name which cannot be named, but you can hear it without ears, can see it without eyes,* which is the same thing all over again. All the Bibles and Scriptures mention the same thing – the Vibration, the Origin of all things.

So we know that the inborn Nature, our Self-Nature or Buddha Nature is the Word, the Sound, or the Vibration. The only remaining question is how to contact this inborn Nature, or God. Because “the Word was God and everything was made by it and there is nothing made that is not made by it”; and in the Bible it also says that *God made humans in His own image,* so we have some clues now. Is it not so? *Everything was*

made by the Word and the Word was God, and then, *God made humans in Hiers own image*. So there is no doubt that $2 + 2 = 4$. God is that Word and the Word is our Origin, and we and the Word are the same; we and God are the same because *God made humans in Hiers own image* and then, on the other side, *everything came from this Word*. Can you understand now?

If my speech is very lousy, you are welcome to throw tomatoes. (Laughter) If not so lousy I welcome your response because we are studying together. Not I am preaching to you, understand that? We are all of the same Nature. Everything was made by God, or this Word, or this Self-Nature. So do not make me a God and sit there like statues waiting for me to preach some high-reaching sermon or something like that. It is very scaring. We should become equal in order to understand each other, and cooperate in order to communicate. I don't want to sit there like a Guru and make so big deal, make a fuss of everything. I sincerely want to discuss with you our questions, our problems, which I had before and which, I know, you now carry in your heart. If I have discovered something new, I will tell you; and if it is incorrect, you may tell me. OK? If you know something better, later you may also inform me. This is a better atmosphere like that.

So now, we know the Bible and the Buddhist Sutras have spoken about the same thing. The only remaining question is how to find the Self-Nature, or this Word, or God. To know God is to know this Word. Is it not so? We come back to the conclusion because the Word was God and everything was made by it and then *God made humans in Hiers own image*. So we come from this Word or this God. Now we will do some intellectual wrestling just for the sake of fun.

If the Bible says that *the Word was God* or *the Word was with God*, then why doesn't it just say: "In the beginning was the Word," or "the Word was God"; or "In the beginning was God"? Isn't that so? It is simpler. Why does it have to say: *In the beginning was the Word*, and then *the Word was with God* and then come back to say, *the Word was God*? Why doesn't it just say, "the Word was God" or "In the beginning was the Word"? – forget about God if there is the Word, and forget about the Word if there is God. What were all these complications for? Who knows? Please raise your hand. (*Someone answers: Because the Vibration is what was God.*) Yeah, that is good; you are enlightened! Give you an "A."

Therefore, we learn from Buddhism that they also say: *In the beginning there was nothing, non-existence*. And in Taoism they also say that in the beginning there was nothing, only Tao, and then the Name came, the Vibration, the Word. In the West we say "the Word" and in China at the time they said "the Name." So the difference between languages made us confused and made all the religions in the world separate and fight with each other. This is a pity. We should not do so.

In the beginning there was only God, or what we call the Love Ocean. There was nothing at all; no Vibration, no Light, no darkness, no thinking and no movement; only God. And then the movement arose, and that was the Word, the Vibration. And then everything became created.

So actually, the Word isn't God, but the Word is God. Without God there is no Word, no Sound; and without Sound we don't know God. This is what it – probably what it exactly meant. It's just like the ocean. If there's no wave then it seems not like an ocean but a big pool, a peaceful lake because the

lake is peaceful and has no waves. So the ocean has waves, we all know this, and the waves arise from the ocean. But the ocean actually has no waves, so the waves “are” the ocean. Is it clear?

The same with all things in the ocean. The fish, squid and all the living beings and non-living beings in the ocean also arose from the ocean. Is it not so? The temperature and the movement in the earth, and the combination of the ocean's atmosphere and temperature and movement made all things become existing in the ocean. They are ocean-born. So, similarly, the Vibration arose in God's blissful ocean of Mercy and Love; and then all things came, by combining with the forces of nature.

There were two forces which then arose. Any movement will create a kind of force or two forces. One is pro and the other is contra, which we call in Chinese “Yin” and “Yang,” and in the Western terminology “negativity” and “positivity.” When this negativity and positivity are mixed together or somehow integrated with each other, they create a third thing. And that's how all things come into existence. It's like electricity. There are two poles, one negative and the other positive, and when the plus and the minus are put together it creates power. That is what we call electric power, and it starts all movement, lights, and everything we need. Actually electricity is neither positive or negative, but without positivity and negativity we have no electricity.

So, the same with all things. God is neither good or bad; Hes is only an ocean of indifference and Love. Hes knows no hatred, no dirtiness, no bad and no sins. Hes discriminates not between the bad and good, the beautiful and ugly. So we call Hirm the Ocean of Love and Mercy. But since the term "Ocean of Love" may be difficult for us to understand, there arises this

Vibration and then the negative and positive, and so we have time to compare, and then we begin to understand what is good and what is bad, what is wisdom and what is ignorance.

It is fun, no? If there were no opposite force, then probably we would always be in ignorance. We could not appreciate God's Love and Mercy. So it also has some purpose.

There is another theory in Buddhism, that people believe there is no God. So the Catholic people call them atheists, meaning they are non-believers, pagans. Now Buddhists deny that they are atheists, by saying they do not believe in God but they believe in Buddha. So both of them are fighting desperate intellectual battle. I think that when Buddha said there was no God, He did not mean to believe in non-God; He only meant that there was no personality – a “one” who sits there and says you are bad or good and punishes this one, gives reward to that one. What He meant is that the Ocean of Love and Mercy has no name, and the Name which you cannot name is the real Name.

So, actually in different countries the enlightened people speak in a different fashion, and so the unenlightened people are easy to get into confusion. Besides, there is a big mechanism of “priest-craft” – unenlightened priests who scare people into all kinds of things in order to catch the devotees for their own selfish motives or their own thirst for power and fame. This is also the reason. If they were all enlightened they would respect all kinds of religious Scriptures and understand how to go inside and get in contact with God. They would know all things without having to refer to the languages.

That is what Lao Tzu said: *Knowing without knowledge*. He also said: *The wise are similar to the ignorant*. Does anyone understand this? Why is it that you become so wise

and then you look like the ignorant? Anyone knows? (*Someone answers: He meant that the wise one knows that the stupid one will never agree with him anyhow.*) Is that not so? Because his way of doing things and seeing things is so different, so he doesn't expect the stupid one to understand him, so whatever the stupid one says the wise may say, "Yes, maybe like that. OK, OK, you carry on that." Is it not so? Yes, it's similar like that. (*Someone else replies: He meant the more one learns the more one realizes how ignorant one is, and so one stops all chatting, all comments and discussing; one becomes humbler.*) That's right. So it looks like one learns more and becomes more stupid, more ignorant and humbler.

But actually the more one learns the humbler one becomes, because he realizes that everyone has God Nature, Buddha's wisdom, and one can learn from each and every one of our neighbors, and one can respect and love each and every one of the human beings he encounters on the street. So one eventually becomes humbler. Maybe that's what Lao Tzu meant. Yes, I do agree with you both.

So, what is it that makes one so humble? It is the great, vast knowledge of the universe which one could never understand enough that makes one humble. For example, when we are in the primary school we learn how to add numbers, such as $4 + 4 = 8$ and $3 + 3 = 6$. And later we learn more complicated things such as, "One tomato costs \$3. So if I buy three tomatoes, how much will they cost? If later someone else asks to buy one from me, then I have only two, then how much do I have to pay? And how much does that person pay?" and all kinds of more complicated things. And when we have solved this problem, we feel very proud, and we come home and tell

our parents how great we are at school – that we can make one tomato less, two tomatoes more without any problem; that we can make the numbers work and run. This is our small accomplishment and we feel very proud. Later, when we go to high school, and college, this petty pride washes itself away because we know there is so little that we know. Is that not so? Yes.

Similarly, those who practice very little boast a lot. They like to let people know that they have “superpower,” and they demonstrate it in public or write books about it, charging people money for it. Of course, that is their ultimate gain; we cannot forget that. But those who’ve practiced up to a very high level will not use these powers any more. They feel ashamed if they ever have to use it, if they are even forced to use it.

Remember the story of Moses? He came back to his kingdom after being banished to the desert and having seen God. That is, he had seen the flame and heard the thunder – remember? That was the inner Vibration and Light. So now we know, if we've practiced this method. Before, I did not know what it meant and I wondered, why was it that God's voice was like thunder? Why did He appear as a big flame? It sounds so terrible and so scaring. No, the fire wasn't the fire, and the thunder wasn't the thunder. The thunder is so soothing, that we want to listen to it again and again. It's not the thunderous, boisterous outside thunder; it is the inner one which heals all kinds of sicknesses, ignorance, arrogance and all kinds of misery.

But I may inform you that the thunder inside is not even the highest Sound you should listen to; it's only one of those beginning Sounds. There are others which are more enchanting, more wisdom-offering. I don't know how to explain because there is everything in it.

Now I've forgotten where I was before – oh yes, Moses. Now, when Moses came back to the king, he showed off his miracles; he turned sticks into snakes. But then, afterward, he repented and said, *I'm sorry. Forgive me, God, for misusing Your power.* This is the attitude we should have in the beginning, anyway. And remember the story of Jesus, when He went to the marriage party? He had to make wine out of water. Was He so willing and so proud, and doing that immediately? No, He wasn't. He even slightly scolded His mother, asking, "Why have you disclosed these things to people?" Is it not so? Yes. He blamed His mother for being so. But because He respected His mother, who had already prepared everything – telling people to quickly fill the buckets and jugs with water and put them over there and wait for Jesus – He was forced into the situation. He was so embarrassed. Was it not so?

This is the attitude of the wise. When they have to do these unavoidable things in unavoidable situations they feel very ashamed, not proud. That is the way to discern between a real and a false master. A false master always advertises for his small, petty miraculous power, whereas the real Master would never. If they have to, they only do it in secret – only the disciples know – and only when it's necessary in order to help the disciples out of some awkward situation or to heal their sickness, or to help them mentally, or to help them in their spiritual progress. The disciples know well how great their Master is; they know very well, they alone know.

No wonder when Jesus or Buddha was alive people worshipped Them as God, because they knew how great their Masters were; only they knew. So when the outside people saw them worshipping their Masters like God, even more rev-

erently than they did the average priests, monks or other so-called prophets, they became jealous, they became angry. So there arose all kinds of attacking and harming.

If only these real Masters could demonstrate to the people at large how great they were and how many kinds of miraculous powers they possessed, then, you could imagine, how many people would run to them! They don't have to do anything more, they don't have to spend so much money, they just go on TV and make a few tricks. Yes. And it would be enough. Or they could heal some sick people in front of thousands, and that would be the end of their mission. Everyone would come to their feet. No need to do any more advertising, and no need to do so very hard work and running around from one place to another. But they are not to do that, they cannot do that. They are not in a position to do so and are too humble to do so. They cannot even imagine doing such a thing. That is the problem. But only their disciples know how great they are and any kind of power the Master does possess.

There is nothing in this universe that doesn't belong to a real Master like Jesus or Buddha or anyone that has attained Their level. The whole universe is Their Home; every living thing, every blade of grass belongs to Them and obeys Them at will. But they do not exercise this authority to press on anything because They have the quality of God. And God is free will, freedom, live and let live, love and love only. No pressure, no pushing, no controlling, no hinting, no tricking, no using any power to convert people but using wisdom and logic in order to appeal to their own wisdom so that they themselves awaken. They awaken themselves. Not by any power or hypnotism.

The Masters can hypnotize, can do all kinds of miracles,

but they don't; because they came from God and God is all free. God doesn't interfere with people's business, God doesn't mess around in other's affairs. Hes leaves you to decide alone which path to follow, which way of life you choose, which realm you want to enter. If you want to go to Heaven Hes opens it. If you want to go to hell it is also free of charge! (Laughter)

The road to Heaven is difficult to follow because: *Narrow is the way that leads to life, and broad is the way that leads to destruction and so many will walk therein*. Why is it that the road to God is so narrow? Some even say it is a razor's edge – so sharp, so difficult to walk on. It is because the road and the way to God is contradictory to our ways of thinking and to the worldly desires and temptations. We have to swim in the ocean but must also prevent our clothes from getting wet. That's how hard it is. We have to live in this world with disciplines and purity like the lotus born from the mud and yet so pure, so clean and so fragrant. This is how we have to become – a Saint in hell!

In Buddhism there is a Saint, and legend has it that he's forever in hell because he vowed to save the sentient beings in hell. Now we imagine no one can live in hell because it is so hot, full of fire and all kinds of punishments. How can a Saint, a Bodhisattva (meaning a Buddha of the second degree) live in hell, and forever? It is possible by the Force of Compassion and the Power of Love – you become immune from any harm or traps. If ordinary people go to hell, they immediately get burned and cannot bear the heat of it; but a Saint or anyone who practices the saintly path can go there and visit, having no harm, because of the protection power from the Master, meaning God's protection.

Now, we all know that we all have God inside because God is within you. We are told like that in the Bible. So why can't we find Hirm? Because we are too busy, we have no time to make contact with Hirm. And whenever we have time, we go to church, then we are busy again: we talk a lot, we sing a lot, also we're busy looking at the words in the Bible – otherwise we will sing it wrong or do some wrong rituals making the priest angry. (Laughter) We are always busy with the outside performances and have no room for an intimate talk with God, therefore we cannot find Hirm. This is the only secret.

If you want to find Hirm, I have actually not much to teach you except how to be quiet and what is the best time to catch God – at what hour. We can make a rendezvous with Hirm every day and then at the exact time Hes will appear. And then we become so acquainted with Hirm. Hes appears everywhere, any time, any hour; and even, when we are so acquainted with Hirm, others will see Hirm within us or near us, standing by. That is so good. Then this so-called God Power will flow out like the ocean or a stream and benefit anyone that comes nearby, like a sandalwood. Or as in a perfume shop anyone that comes into smells the nice fragrance, free of charge. Or sometimes the shopkeeper will give you a free spray and you come out also feeling so nice. (Master laughs) It is the same with the Self-realized soul. It emits a kind of Godly fragrance and a supra-mundane virtue that everyone will love to be near and everyone near will feel naturally comfortable.

The same with the Master, so-called Master, or Buddha or Christ. They do not actually save any beings, they do not do any particular gestures or have any intention to catch the souls and bring them back Home. No. They themselves are the mag-

net – they just attract, they can't help it. Even if they want to stop it, it's too late. Even if they want to stop giving blessings and happiness and joy to the surrounding people, they cannot do it – it's too late. It's just like a fountain, which has to keep running and running; just like the ocean, which has to keep being filled like that. However much the rain comes down, it will not become more full, however much the sun shines it will not become less. It is forever like that.

So, all of us can become Saints like Buddha and Jesus. Buddha said that saving sentient beings He did not save sentient beings – no one was being saved by Buddha. Although His disciples at that time said they were saved by Him, He proclaimed He didn't save anyone. That is the meaning of a natural power which flows spontaneously and naturally from a high Self-realized soul, from a Master soul to benefit others without Him having to control or do anything on purpose. This is what is meant by saying: ***Saving sentient beings but not saving sentient beings***. Because if they still have a sense of saving anyone that means they are not completely liberated from the ego, from the self-centered sense of existence. They are not yet entirely liberated from the frame of the human self, so they cannot do this universal work. They cannot contain the limitless, endless, boundless, infinite Power of God if they still have a sense of self, because it limits everything. You cannot contain the limitless if you are limited. That is the logic of it. So in order to become co-worker with God or a Messiah or the Master soul, you must become limitless; and in order to become limitless we must practice self-loosening.

So it is said in the Bible: ***One who sacrifices the self will gain everything***. Isn't it so? One who loses the self will gain

everything, one who takes care of the self will lose everything. Is that not so? This is what it means. To lose the self is to lose the ego, the sense of limited being and become one with the universe. But it is easier said than done. To be so, to be such a limitless and boundless being, one must practice the ever-present Power of God. One must reserve some time daily to contact with this “Word,” this “with God” Word, and this “was God” Word, or with *the Name that cannot be named*, or with the Vibration, or the Sound Stream in the Buddhist terminology. They all spoke of the same thing.

If we want to reach the same height as the ancient Masters, we have to follow the same path as theirs. It’s only simple; so simple is that. It’s just as if anyone wants to become a doctor, he has to follow the university way of teaching medicine, and the previous doctors can teach him and he will become a doctor. To become like Christ or Buddha we have to practice the same method as They did; we have to contact the inner flame, the inner thunderous voice of God. And this way I can offer you, and gladly, and freely – free of all kinds of bondage, conditions, financial, physical or mental commitments. Only your devotion, your devotion to your own practice is needed. Every day you must practice, by your own time schedule and arrangement and your own free will. That is all that is needed.

Let Peace Begin with Us

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
October 1, 1989 (Video Tape #99)
Malaysia
(Originally in English)

Ladies, gentlemen and all my friends, before beginning any lecture at any place, my heart is always deep in the thought of how to make a perfect speech in order to offer the best benefit to the listeners. So every time, before making a lecture, I always pray to God, to the Buddhas, that They may mercifully help me and speak through me. Then our friends in all directions, including the devas, the ghosts and whoever is present, will derive the best benefit from my two hour lecture.

So today I've been praying very hard. I have not gone to the temple to pray, I have not gone to the church to pray. But I've prayed in the "church" of my heart. I have used this precious body as a church, as a temple, to pray to God, to the Buddha, because I would like you to derive the best benefit, and have the most memorable time from listening to this lecture.

Each time I pray like this, there are blessings and there are benefits. This is the reason why everyone prays everyday. We go to the church to pray to God, to the mosque to pray to Allah, or to the temple to pray to the Buddha because we do feel the benefit. We do feel the blessing from the Buddhas, God, Allah or whatever name you might worship.

Because of our different backgrounds and different cultures, we call the Creator of all things by different names. We call the greatest Power, which loves us so much, by different names. Some call it God, some call it Buddha Nature, some call it Tao and some call it Allah, so we should not argue. It doesn't matter in what kind of religion we believe. No matter if you are Christian, Moslem, Buddhist or Taoist, everyone believes that his or her religion is the most beneficial, and so do I. Whatever is best for us is good for us.

But then, we sometimes have a desire to see the head of our religion. For example, if we are Buddhists, we would like to see, to have contact with the Buddha, with the Bodhisattva, with Shakyamuni Buddha or with Quan Yin Bodhisattva. If we are Christians we sometimes would like to get in touch with God, with Jesus, with Saint Mary or with the past Saints that we are praying to everyday. I do not know if you want to see Buddha or to see God that much, as much as I did; but I did want to see Buddha, I did want to see God. I wanted to talk directly to

God, directly to Buddha about all the anxieties, doubts and the suffering in my heart that came from my own experience, and from the experience of other suffering human beings.

Before becoming enlightened I always went to the church and to the temple to pray everyday. If I saw a church I would go in and pray. If I saw a temple, I would go in and worship and pray to the Buddha. I remember that I had only two prayers. When I went to the church, I said to God, "Dear God, if You really exist, please, let me see You; make it in any way, but let me see You one day. I just want to see You, and nothing else." That was my first prayer. And one day in the temple I prayed to the Buddha, "Dear Buddha, if You really exist, please show Yourself to me. Also, let other people see You. Please let us see You, let us know Your glory, so that we may believe more in Your compassion and power, and that we may feel secure in our heart." I'd pray like that many times but I did not see God or Buddha.

So one day I got a little bit fed up, and I cried. It was in the morning when I did the morning service to the Buddha. Do you know how the Buddhist do the morning service? Yes? You get a wooden fish and a bell, you knock it like this: (Master demonstrates) "ko, ko, ko, tung; ko, ko, ko, tung..." while you repeat the mantras, like the "Tabei Chow," "Namo hanadana-dorayeye namo ariye polojeti" etc. Then you repeat the name of Quan Yin Bodhisattva, "Namo Quan Shih Yin Pu'sa," or the name of Amitabha, "Namo Omi To Fwo," like that many, many times.

That day after I had done this and hadn't seen the Buddha, after praying so many times, I started to cry like a baby. You know, when you get nothing you stamp your feet and

say, "Why haven't I got it?" (Laughter) So, I was crying very hard and I said, "Buddha, it is not that we don't believe You, it is that we don't see You, and we feel so much longing in our hearts. How can You expect people to believe You when they don't see You?" (Applause)

I was crying and sobbing so hard that a neighbor came and knocked at my door saying, "Wha.. wha.. what's the matter with you? You won't do anything silly, will you?"

I said, "No, no. Why? Why would I do anything silly?"

"I heard you crying all morning!"

She thought that I was doing something stupid. I was only crying to the Buddha, and I cried so hard and so loud, that I woke up all the neighbors. I felt so ashamed. But since that day I realized that even if I prayed everyday and even if I did my morning and evening prostrations and recitations before the Buddha's image, I would not feel satisfied in my heart because I had not seen any sign of the Buddha. So I decided that day that I must go. I must go and do something else. Since this way didn't work I had to find another way. I couldn't just stay there and get nowhere.

Because I was longing so much to see the Buddha, I went everywhere, prayed in every temple, and worshipped in every place in the world that had temples, churches, monks and nuns. Whenever I heard of someone that had a little enlightenment or was famous, I would go there, bow and ask for some enlightenment.

So many, many years passed like this, but I didn't get much. I had some, yes, I had some of what you call "Gan Yin," which means some kind of intuitive response that you get when you pray to the Buddha or God. One day I kept star-

ing at the Amitabha Buddha – I was a devoted Buddhist, also a devoted Christian – and said, “Why don't You take me to the Western Paradise?” (Laughter) Then I added, “Give me some Gan Yin – some response.” And then He did.

I was so sincere and heartbroken, that He felt I deserved some response, so He lifted me up very high. Suddenly I felt nothing underneath. I was so scared; I said, “No, no, no. Put me down.” It's a feeling like you are flying. Do you know? No? You have had that experience, hah? (Laughter) If you pray very hard, your body will become light. You'll get some Gan Yin, some response from Buddha. Then sometimes you'll go into samadhi. That's what we call “Nien Fo San Mei,” (in Chinese) which means when you recite the name of the Buddha you become excited, you have ecstasy – “Ru Ding,” (in Chinese) samadhi. You sit there and you feel so absolutely beautiful, blissful, tranquil and haven't a worry in the world. That is what we call samadhi in Sanskrit, or “San Mei” in Chinese. Yes, in the West they also say samadhi, meaning you enter into a blissful, tranquil state of mind where you have no sorrow, no worry and no fear. That's what we call samadhi.

In the samadhi state we feel absolutely perfect. We feel that nothing in this world bothers us. Nothing happens at all and everything is perfect. Sometimes when we enter into this condition we feel the world is perfectly in order. Therefore when Lao Tzu entered into samadhi He exclaimed: “Tien hsia ben wu shih,” which means under the sky there is no problem; everything is in perfect control.

Now, that was one little experience that I had when I was sincerely praying to the Buddha and to God. But then that was all I had, nothing else. So I yearned for more and more, be-

cause the Buddha gave me a little bit and I did not get enough. You know what it is like when we have some good, tasty food. If people let you taste only a little bit, of course you'll feel frustrated and you want more. I wanted more. So I kept running here and there looking for some solution. Only after getting enlightenment, I mean the true, big enlightenment, not the small one, did I realize that everything already exists within ourselves, and we have no need to run so fast or anywhere to look for it. We only need to be quiet, be still, and discover.

Most of us think that it is the Buddha who gives us whatever we have prayed for. No, no, we already have it. It's just that we do not know we have it. When we pray very hard and sincerely then our ego, our mind, disappears. We do not feel separated from the greatest Power which we call God, the Creator, the Tao or the Buddha Nature. Because we are not separated from that Power, at that moment we suddenly become wiser, we suddenly see things more clearly, and then we see that we have already got these things. They do not come from the sky, they already exist in our store of merit.

Why have I said such things? Because I would like to remind you, that if in our life, the conditions are not so good, if everything we desire doesn't come to fulfillment, it is because we forget to look for what we want. For example, Buddhas exist, Jesus is still there, God exists, Allah exists, whomever you pray to exists. But we don't see Him because we forget to look for Him or we forget to look for Them. Not only does the Buddha, God, Jesus or whomever you believe in still exist, but everything, every single thing we want already exists in our store of merit. Otherwise we wouldn't want it. We wouldn't have any idea whatsoever of what to want.

For example, in Africa there are some very uncivilized tribes of people. They have never seen television before, not even in the past thirty or the past hundred years. So the idea to go and watch television never crosses their minds because in their memory television doesn't exist. So everything we wish for in this life, such as wealth, happiness, bliss, contact with God, Buddha, etc., already exists in our store for us. Our past memories from our past lives in this world have already registered these kinds of images; therefore, we want them now. Otherwise how could we want them? How could we ever know that such things exist? We want them because we know we had them.

So, when we are enlightened or we get the greatest wisdom, we will discover these things in our "storeroom." The Buddha doesn't give them to us. God will not grant them to us. They've already granted them to us. It's just that we have forgotten to use them. That is why we have a way to recognize God's love, to recognize Buddha's compassion, which is, to be still, to be quiet, and to listen to what God or Buddha tells us.

There are two parts to practice everyday: the first part is to pray for what we want, and the second part is to listen to what God or Buddha tells us – where to get what we want. If we are always asking and do not listen, do not receive, then we will not get it. Most of the time we are too busy praying for something and don't know what God wants to tell us. For example, if we go to a teacher to ask some questions on an English subject, we have to be still, be quiet, and listen to the answer. Is that not so? Yes?

So now, if we ask God or Buddha for something, and keep asking everyday in the morning, at noon time and in the evening, then it is always "we" who are talking. Of course we

will not know what God's answer is and what Buddha tells us to do. That's why our life doesn't improve much, even though God always mercifully wants to help us; even though the Buddhas in the ten directions always watch over us and want to give us many instructions, such as: how to handle our lives, how to solve our daily problems, and how to get the greatest intelligence in order to survive in this world, and to get through the different levels of worlds in the whole universe.

We must be still sometimes, and that's what we call "meditation." Now, if we sit there and we are still thinking in our heads, then that is not meditation but just "talking in silence." (Master laughs) Therefore we must know how to meditate, how to sit still, and that's what I want to offer to you. There is a way to do that properly and correctly so that we may receive the message from God, from Buddha, from Allah or from whomever you believe in the most. We have to be still sometimes to get the message through. Not that God doesn't listen to us; not that Amitabha doesn't listen to us; it is we who don't listen to Them.

That's why in my book I say that if you recite the names of the Buddha and God, it will not serve you much. I do not mean that God and Buddha won't listen to you; but that we are too noisy, we talk too much, and we do not listen. So there is a way to solve this problem. Everyday we still pray to the Buddha, we still pray to God, but then we must save some time to sit still and listen to the message that God wants to give us, that the Buddha wants to direct to us. Is that logical? Yes? Thank you.

So now we come to the second part: how to sit still. Most of us are not still; we get even worse when we sit. Is that not

true? Now, if you do not believe me, then tonight after you get home, try to sit still and put your mind blank for five minutes. If you can do that, you are my master. (Laughter) It's very, very difficult. You may put your body in a box, you might close yourself like this, but the mind is still running all over the place. That is not the way to meditate, and that is not the way to listen to God's or Buddha's message.

Now there is a better way to do that. We may pray to the Buddha, to our own Buddha Nature inside or to our own mercy and goodness, which also exists inside us, which the Chinese called "Hsin Ben Shan," meaning the human beings' original goodwill or goodness. Therefore if we believe in God, then we pray to God; if we believe in Buddha, we pray to the Buddha; if we believe in "Hsin Ben Shan" meaning the goodness inside us, we pray to the goodness inside us; but, pray to the highest Power, wherever that may be. Always pray to the highest Power, the highest God, the highest Buddha. Do not pray to the small gods, like we call in Chinese "Shern" (the spirits) or "Guei" (the ghosts), namely, the local gods because their power is "local." (Laughter) That's why we should not pray to a local one but to the highest, the top one, then what we get is the highest, the top Power. (Loud applause)

We pray for what we want, but it must be a good prayer. I do not mean that God will help you succeed when you pray to kill someone or to rob a bank. No, no, no, that would not be helpful. What I mean is, you pray within the limits of human compassion, logically, and for the peace of human life. You pray for compassion, peace or the highest guidance so that your life, the neighbor's life and the life of the nation may be prosperous, wise and peaceful. Then everyday God will guide us, Buddha

will guide us in how to do things. Suddenly things will change. Things will become better, smoother and you'll do things better than before. Your decisions will be wiser and quicker than before. That's when you know God is guiding you.

After doing that you will feel different. You will truly know there is a greater Power than our brain, which we call God, Buddha Nature or Tao. I don't care what you call it because we have the freedom to name things differently. That is how we listen to God or to Buddha. If we do not do this everyday, we will not get much of the message from Buddha and God; then, we do not know whether God really exists, whether Buddha exists, and whether They love us or not.

Now, if you do not get this benefit from the mediation you are now using, then I have another way to help you to recognize the love of God, of the Creator and of the Buddha. When you see different flowers, look at the heart of the flower, look at how beautiful they are and how nice they smell. That is the purpose of their existence. It is because God, Buddha, Tao or Allah loves us so much that They created these to please our senses, to make our life more beautiful, more bearable and more comfortable. And when you look at the eyes of your child, you'll see they are sparkling with intelligence, love, curiosity to learn and warmth, that he gives you everyday through family love. That is how God or Buddha expresses Their compassion and love for us. Otherwise, if we don't have these things, like the love of the children, the flowers, the beautiful sky, the stars, the moon or the sun, our life would be so miserable.

So, even before we know whether God, Buddha or Saints exist or not, we already can tell that there is an unconditional love that comes from we don't know where. There exists an

unconditional love for all the people and all things in this world. God doesn't only love human beings, but also animals; Buddha doesn't only take care of us, but also cares for everything. So you see even the grass is made for the cows, the female birds are made for the male, the honey is made for the bees and so on.

Therefore in the Christian Bible it is said, God made everything for every being accordingly. In the Buddhist sutra, Buddha explained that the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas sometimes transformed themselves into animals, birds, flowers or water, in order to serve and help sentient beings. There are similar sayings in different languages and Scriptures.

So, in order to know God's or Buddha's love for us, we must appreciate all of the creation around us; we must look more carefully, more attentively and more gratefully at all things that come into our use. Otherwise it's easy to forget and easy to be ungrateful.

The Creator and the Buddha do not mind if we are ungrateful to Them. They do not seek our gratitude. It is just that if we forget to be grateful, then we lose our sense of grandeur. We forget that there is a greater Power which looks after everything. And in that case we will feel too lonely, too desperate and too much suffering.

Outside we should be grateful for all the things that we receive. Inside, we should sit still sometimes and know that the Buddha exists; we should listen to the Voice inside, the still Voice, the Voice of God, the Voice of Buddha. If we do that everyday we will see a great difference in our daily dealings with others, in our intelligence and in our viewpoints. That is what we call "meditation."

Now, it would be too easy if we just had to sit, meditate, listen to God's Voice and get so much. So there are some little conditions that we should pay attention to. They are printed in the books outside.

Now first let me talk a little bit about these books. My little books are not really my books but the books of my disciples. I've never written any books, nor can I write Chinese. It was all my disciples' work. I only talked and they recorded the talks, published them, and put my name on the cover. That is how I got famous and got into trouble. (Laughter)

I stayed in Formosa, off and on, for about five years and never had any trouble. Everywhere I went I was welcomed and loved, given some money, something to eat and some clothes to wear because I was a nun, a very un-famous nun. So I had no trouble. Then somewhere some Formosan caught me and asked me to talk about something and to teach them the Quan Yin Method, so I did. They recorded everything I said, even those things that I said to them personally, that were meant only for them, because people's levels are different. Sometimes you can say something to this person, but not to the other person. Is that not so? Then they just blindly put everything into print, (Master laughs) put it into the open, and I started to get into trouble. That's how you got to know and that's how I got into trouble. Almost everyone who had loved me before have now become my opponent, but never mind. It is only a small trouble in comparison to the benefit people get, so I do not mind getting into trouble for that.

My disciples have very good hearts and they desire to give others whatever benefit they get. I cannot stop them because they have a good motive. If I stopped them, then it

means I do not have as much compassion as they do. Therefore I let them do whatever they feel is beneficial for others.

In these books (*The Key of Immediate Enlightenment*), both in English and Chinese, I was actually speaking to my disciples at that time on how to advance on the path of knowledge. For example, it's not enough that everyday we do like this – sit straight and close our eyes, in a Buddha-like fashion, and then everyone knows you are a great practitioner. (Laughter) It's not enough. We must make meditation become a way of life. For example, when we meditate we will get in touch with God's and Buddha's Power. Then we have to let this Power manifest in our daily dealings with others by becoming more loving. That is the evidence of our advancement.

Now, if we want to prove that we are more loving, then we must do a little charity: we must help the poor, we must be more obedient to our parents, look after the old, the infants, the widows, and refrain from overindulging in enjoyments. We must see the suffering of other creatures as our own. Therefore we shouldn't rejoice at the killing of animals and in the eating them. That is the reason why we should be vegans.

If you do not want to follow a vegan diet because there are too many problems, such as because of business, because the wife refuses to cook, because..., because..., and because..., (Laughter) there is an alternative way. For example, when the Buddha first accepted some monks into His monk order, these monks, as well as other lay disciples, were used to eating meat because in their home country grass and vegetables couldn't grow. So the Buddha said: "All right, then you slowly change from eating meat to eating vegetables."

So, in accordance with the Buddha I also offer some al-

ternatives. For example, we should try to be vegans whenever it's convenient for us; and we should try, as much as possible, to make an excuse to be a vegan instead of making an excuse to eat meat. That's what I mean by leaning more and more toward compassion and extending love to all the creatures. All religions mention that we should extend our love to all beings; not only to human beings.

So, whether we believe in any religion or not, we can all believe in "Hsin Ben Shan," in the goodness and compassion of our own hearts. We should try to save as many lives as possible. It doesn't mean that if you eat one piece of meat less that many things will change; but it is the principle of training our hearts toward compassion. Let our compassion grow; do not kill it. The intention is important.

There are some groups of practitioners who do not eat vegan food because they think it's not convenient. Everyday they have to engage in entertainment, to exchange friendship or do business with others and they think it's not convenient to keep a vegan diet. So they decide to fast one or two days a week in order to cut down the meat intake, as a sign of leaning towards compassion to all creatures. Therefore we've heard that such and such a group has a 5-day fast, such and such a religion has a one month, once a year fast. These things are the leftovers from a very old but very efficient tradition.

In Buddhism we also have many kinds of vegetarians, like the whole-life vegetarian, 2-day-a-month vegetarian, 4-day-a-month vegetarian and 6-day-a-month vegetarian, etc., to let people become more used to the vegetarian diet. But this system is a little bit complicated for you. For example, we oriental Buddhists have a very strict lunar calendar, and eat veg-

etarian meals on the first day, the fifteenth and at the end of the month. If you are a busy working man, such as a businessman or a newspaperman, you cannot always check the “moon” calendar, or you might not even have a “moon” calendar but only the “sun” calendar, (Laughter) so it’s difficult to know which date is which. I suggest, as a supportive sign of compassion for all beings that we take a vegan diet whenever we remember, wherever it is convenient for our life, and that is already much, much better. Is that OK? Yes? Thank you.

In this way we are more relaxed in our mind and heart. Why? Because whenever we eat meat, it is unavoidable that some of the hatred, anger and frustration in the animal’s heart caused when it is departed, will be imprinted upon our subconsciousness; then we’ll feel uneasy inside. When we sleep at night we have nightmares. When animals see us they are frightened of us and run away. And when we are sick it’s difficult to heal because of the atmosphere of the hatred and anger, which hangs around the meat that we eat.

Therefore the more we eat vegan, the better our conscience. We will have fewer guilty feelings in our subconsciousness, and we will sleep better with fewer nightmares. So you should try. It’s better for our mind, for our heart, for our health and for everything.

Now, I don’t read newspapers as much as you would, except when I travel and sit in the airplane for 15, 20, 30 hours, I have nothing else to do and I cannot sleep that much or meditate so long. (Laughter) Then I grab a newspaper and have a look. Every time I looked at the newspaper there was nothing good there. (Laughter) No news is good news.

The last time, on the way here from Hong Kong, I read

the Newsweek and Time magazines. I saw all kinds of disasters and catastrophes such as: hurricanes, airplane crashes, murders and diseases. There are now some kinds of diseases that we never knew before in history. For example, one of the latest diseases is a kind of worm disease which is incurable. The worms will eat a hole from inside out and you will see the worms crawling out from inside of the hole. Can you imagine a whole body full of such worms? The physicians have no way to cure it. When I looked at this I felt, you know, nauseated; I wanted to vomit. Not because of the terrible sight but because of the unbearable feeling of pity for the patient.

Normally we have worms in the stomach, and that is already unbearable. Now, if you have worms all over inside the body and at any time they can eat a hole and crawl out to let you have a look; your brain, blood and flesh are all full of worms..... can you imagine what kind of life that would be?

So, I think that we, who have good health and financial status, should pray that God will never put us into this kind of situation. We should also prepare ourselves to be more clean and more receptive to God's protection, so that we would never fall into such a pitiful state. The best way is to try to avoid indirect killing, such as eating meat. If we don't eat meat, no one kills.

In Buddhism, the Law of Cause and Effect is absolute and exact. Whatever you do to others will be done to you in one way or another. Not only in Buddhism, but also in Christianity it is said: *As you sow, so shall you reap*. And if you look carefully at other religions, you will also see the Law of Karma – the Law of Cause and Effect – whatever you do will be done to you. Therefore Confucius said: *Do not do to others*

what you do not desire for yourself. He also knew the Law of Cause and Effect, meaning whatever you do, you will get the result, bad or good. If we do not want any bad results, we must start to do good things in order to get good results. I don't need to tell you about Heaven and hell, I am just talking practically, for your daily lives.

If we want a healthy mind, a healthy body, a good conscience and a good night's sleep, then we should have more compassion for other people and for animals. If we give others peace and security, then we will also get peace and security.

I have never killed anything ever since my childhood, not even an ant, a worm or a bird. And I do not like to see killing. So you see, even though in Au Lac where there were so many disasters, people being killed and problems, I have escaped. I did not have to go on a... like the "boat people," I did not have any trouble, because I left Au Lac before it was under the communists. Why was that so? It was because I had no hatred, no killing and no bad actions in my life; therefore received good treatment.

So, from my own experience I can tell you that whatever good you do to others, it will be done to yourself. It isn't because I became a nun or practiced the Quan Yin Method that I say so. No, before that I already saw the results of compassion. For example, in my country sometimes the children would go and get the birds out of the nests, eat them, and so on; but I never participated. I always hated this and told them not to do it. And whenever I saw a bird wounded I would take it home, care for it until it got well, and then set it free. I think it's because of that, that the animals are so friendly with me.

When I was in Germany, one day after reciting the Bud-

dha's name I went out and a bird came up to me. It flew to my feet and stood there. So I said, "What do you want?" (Master laughs) The bird chirped, chirped and chirped as if talking to me. It stayed there for quite a long time; we talked for about half an hour. I don't know if the bird understood me or not, but I did not understand it. (Laughter) Anyhow we kept talking, and it looked like a very lively conversation because we stayed very close, like this, and it never flew away. Many people saw us talking and came out to have a look at this phenomenon. When the bird saw so many people it flew away. It was frightened of them, but not of me.

When I was in India I lived in the Himalayas – not in a good room, but in a mud house. This mud house had only a few stones for a roof, which could crash in on me at any time because the structure was not good. The mud walls had thousands of holes in it. The wind could blow in, the stars could shine through, and all the animals could crawl in and be my friends.

Everyday when I woke up after meditation I would find at least five scorpions sitting there meditating with me. (Laughter) Do you know what scorpions are? Their tails are very pointed, and if they sting you once, then "good-bye." Everyday the scorpions and snakes all sat around and meditated. When I got up and saw so many friends, I thought that this was not a good place for them because if I walked around and was not careful enough, I would step on them. So everyday I had to take a big jar, put all of them in it, and take them for a walk. I put them on a big rock, and then they would disappear.

I think because I was so friendly with the animals, that the animals were also friendly with me. Can you imagine animals that are like that? If we are friendly to people, to every

person and to every being, then there wouldn't be any wars in this world. So today or tomorrow we begin our "peace program."

Everyone talks about peace. They make a lot of fuss, go to a big hotel, and sit at a big table to talk about peace; but these talks go nowhere. We must begin with actions; we must begin by withdrawing from our killing instinct; we must begin to protect all lives as much as we possibly can. Peace begins with us, with me and with you; then, peace will be with the whole world. We cannot sit here and wait for the president, the peace-makers or whomever to come and talk for us. No. We must decide it for ourselves.

Therefore, I think if we meditate and minimize our intake of meat, then we'll become more peaceful within ourselves; and because we are more peaceful, we will radiate a kind of invisible, peaceful atmosphere around us, which will affect everyone. Then we do not need to talk about peace, peace will be there; we don't have to advocate peace, peace will be there. Is that agreeable? Yes? Thank you. (Loud applause)

Yes, if we keep ourselves purified, then we can be closer to God, or to whatever Power that we believe in. If we believe in God, we will get closer to God; if we believe in Buddha and we purify ourselves, we will get closer to the Buddha. This is definite. I've tried it, so I can inform you about this. Actually it's not that I am informing you, you already know it. I am only reminding you so that you do not forget we have our own goodness inside us. Do not forget we have God dwelling within our bodies, and do not forget we have Buddha in our hearts.

Do not forget we have God inside us. We have the Bud-

dha Nature within us. Seek, find, and awaken that Power, to help you. You will get help and you will get blessings. May all blessings be with you.

The Six Buddhist Perfections

Spoken by The Supreme Master Ching Hai
October 2, 1989 (Video Tape #100)
Malaysia
(Originally in English)

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. Let us close our eyes again and pray that God, Buddhas bless our assembly so that after the lecture you will derive the most benefit.

I would like to give my sincerest thanks to our Malaysian disciples and every other person who helps in contributing effort to this assembly. It wasn't very easy; there were many, many obstacles and we did not expect things to go easy way, especially it's the first time that I come to Malaysia. There

were many things that we didn't have enough time to prepare, there were so many things that our disciples did not know. So, that we have this meeting was due to the grace of God, of the Buddhas in the ten directions; otherwise it might not happen, it could be that I couldn't speak at all.

In China we also arranged two lectures in two places, but at the last moment they were cancelled. It wasn't that we wanted to cancel, it was due to the prevailing circumstances in Mainland China. So, I'm extremely happy and grateful for the blessing and grace from God, from Buddha that I may have this opportunity to see your shining faces and feel your affections, at least for two days.

Last night we had a successful meeting and discussion together. And today let us hope that the same will happen.

Today I will also begin to speak about something that I have learned and something that I myself have realized; and afterwards we will reserve some time to answer your various questions, including those from last night that I did not finish. So, I wish that all of us have a memorable time and pass a good discussing time together. May God bless us!

There are some people requesting me to speak Mandarin, but there are even more people asking me to speak English. It's very difficult, this position. So, first of all I apologize to those good Chinese friends to pardon us. We have plenty of tapes and books on my Chinese lectures, and you could even order more from Formosa from our address; but for the majority of English speaking ones our information is still very meager, very little. Therefore please allow me to speak English again tonight, without feeling resentful. Is that all right? (Loud applause)

Even if I could speak all the languages it would not be

enough, because here in the assembly yesterday we had so many nationalities together: Hindu, the French, Canadian, Australian, German, English, Chinese and Malayan, of course; then again the Chinese speak so many dialects. So we have to put up with our imperfections in this world. (Laughter)

Many people asked me, last night, the similar question, "How to meditate correctly?" I have explained that when you choose a meditation technique and a Master who teaches you that technique, after a while, if the technique and the Master help you to develop your compassion, your wisdom and peace of mind, then the meditation is correct.

Also, many people asked me that if we meditate without a proper guidance of the Master, won't it make trouble for us – the so-called "being possessed," meaning our mentality will be disturbed? I said, "Yes, it's true."

It is my job to look after whoever calls on me for help. It is like a policeman, who is obliged when anyone calls on him to protect that one's family, friend or children. In every nation there are many kinds of people who are specialized in many kinds of jobs, such as a doctor to look after whoever is sick and calls on him; the policeman to protect whoever is in need of protection, etc. And there are some special people who protect all kinds of people, like the Red Cross. When the two countries are at war with each other and have wounded soldiers, the Red Cross takes care of all wounded soldiers of both countries, not minding who is bad, who is good, who is the right one, or who is not the right one. It just takes care of everyone who is wounded and is in need.

So, similarly, there are some beings, maybe human, maybe angel, maybe Buddha, Bodhisattva, that take care of

everyone who calls on them for help because that job is given to them. You yourself can also apply for this kind of job. It's not that I alone can do this, everyone can.

So, the motive of our practicing Quan Yin Method is to become one like that, to become one who helps anyone in need, who helps anyone, any time, anywhere without any discrimination of races, of nationalities, of religions, of beliefs; without any conditions or whatsoever. This kind of being, fortunately, we have many in this world. You don't often hear of them, and it is very difficult to know them except by some of our many, many virtues, merits in the past lives or in this present life. Another exception is that if we sincerely pray every day for blessing and guidance from God or from Buddha, then we get to know this kind of special person or beings, who are specialized in helping others. Is that clear? Nothing mysterious, no? It's just a different kind of job.

Most of the jobs are paid jobs, but this one is not paid. (Laughter) Oh, it's paid. Paid "a lot." Paid with a lot of persecution, (Laughter) scolding, obstacles and many such lovely things. Yes, most of people doing this kind of job get a very heavy pay – heavy burden of obstacles, of karma and a lot of bad reputation. But also they get a lot of love from people. Everywhere they go the people who have affinity with them will love them; who believe and get benefit from them will love them. Whereas those who haven't known their power, who have not understood their status in the universe, may doubt them by giving them troubles and may even, for example, crucify them, like Jesus.

So, before you apply for this job, I would advise you to consider deeply, (Master and everyone laugh) and wisely

whether you should take it. But I guess that for me personally this job is the noblest, and more people should take this job to help others in need, because not everyone is born into Christianity, not everyone is born a Buddhist, not everyone is born into any kind of religion and already has a foundation of faith to sustain him all his life. Some people do not know much about any religion, leading a very no-direction life. Their lives have no direction, no purpose, no faith, no comfort.

Nowadays the communication system is very wonderful, therefore we get to know many wonderful beings. I believe in Malaysia you also have heard some of the great Masters from different countries like India, or maybe from Formosa, or maybe from another country; and I'm glad for you if you have known any of these great Masters, and I'm happy if you have studied with any or many of them.

In case you haven't known any of these or you haven't found any good technique or any purpose for your life, then I may help you. Even later if you would find a better one, you're welcome to fly. (Master and everyone laugh) We have no obligation, and no binding to anything – you don't need to change your religion, your way of life to become my disciple, no need. We just offer you a way to tranquilize your hasty life and to pacify your heart so that you may work better, think better, that your health may be better, and your spiritual need may be more fulfilled; and then from that standpoint, you may be more efficient in loving and helping others.

Because if we do not feel well ourselves it is difficult to love and assist others. Is that not so? Yes? Yes. So, first we take care of ourselves and then we can take care of others. That's why Jesus said: ***Seek you first the Kingdom of God, and then***

all other things shall be added unto you. That's why Buddha emphasized that everyone of us should become Buddha – to become Buddha is to discover the Kingdom of God within, so it's a similar saying as Jesus', only of different phrase. To become Buddha first, and then you can help others. For example, if we ourselves can't swim, how can we save others who are drowning? So if we want to save other's lives, we must first learn to swim.

Before I became a Buddhist nun, before I left home, I also had helped many people and I had been very enthusiastic about helping people. I had been helping since I was young. But the more I helped, the more I felt helpless. It looks like that you can never help enough. And then my husband was complaining that he never saw me at home, (Laughter) neither in the weekend nor in the weekdays. “Marry a wife is just like marrying a ghost,” he said. (Laughter) And when I went home after all, I would stay at the altar-room and recite my Buddhist Scriptures and then meditate. So actually he benefited nothing from our marriage.

And all the money I earned would fly out of the window – went to India, to Africa, to Afghanistan... to all the offerings and people – and even that was not enough. He would put his money for my use, which I'd also give out and away. Even then I had none. I still felt my effort was like a drop of water in the desert. Therefore the more I helped the more I became helpless. Then I remembered Buddha said: ***You must become Buddha – when your power will be increased many, many folds, then you can help whomever you like.*** And I also remembered Jesus said: ***Seek you first the Kingdom of God.***

So I resolved to find the Kingdom of God, I resolved

to seek the Buddha Nature within myself. Because of this Quan Yin Method I have found the Buddha Nature, quicker than usual, quicker than with any other methods. Therefore I would recommend it to you, in case you feel the same longing to seek the Kingdom of God within. But if you haven't longed enough, then you can meditate with the little technique I've just shared with you. Do not forget to pray God, pray Buddha or whomever you believe to protect you, help you. And in case of emergency you can call my name for help – do not forget that. Otherwise if you meditate without my protection, it's true you may get into trouble – that everyone knows. In case you haven't known, here I repeat again.

We need a Master who has experiences on the road to help us and to hold our hands in time of need, in time of trouble. Because we have two sides of nature within ourselves: the one side is of all good, all glory, all mercy, all compassion and all love; the other side is all troublesome, egoistic, destructive, pessimistic and of all kinds of negative nature. If we blindly tap inside, tap within, we might tap the good one, or we may tap the bad one. That's why without a good technique, without a good Master you might tap the wrong one and then all the bad sides come up and make your life topsy-turvy.

We should understand that the negative side within us is as powerful as the good side – nearly as powerful. Both are very similar in nature. So we can be very conducive, can be very compassionate, can be very merciful, can be very powerful; but we can also be very destructive, very negative, very unmerciful if we tap the wrong side.

There are some people who lack compassion, wisdom or sympathy with others. It is because they tend toward the nega-

tive side of their nature. It's not difficult if we want to correct that. We should study more the Bible, we should study more the Buddhist Scriptures, and we should be more diligent to practice whichever religion we believe in.

For example, in the Buddhist Scriptures the Buddha advised us to have the six ways of perfection. The first one is charity. Charity means you give away what you have in abundance to help others. For example, if you have a lot of money and you don't use that much then you should look after whom-ever in need of money, or whoever is not having enough necessity in life, or help the poor. That's one way of charity.

I've heard a very lovely story about Malaysia, which I do not know is true or not, and nor do I know if that I speak it up will offend anyone here. If it does please forgive me. But as I've felt so good about it, I want to share it with you.

I've heard that in Malaysia after you borrow money from someone or from the bank, if your business doesn't go well and you don't have enough money to pay back, then it's all right. Is that so? Is that true? (*Someone answers: Yes.*) That's very good, that's fantastic. (Laughter) That's truly what God wants us to do. If he doesn't have enough money then it's all right; no need to take him to the court, no need to give him trouble. He doesn't have money, then he doesn't have; even if he had, he'd spend it as same as you would spend it. So what of it? (Laughter) That's very good. It makes me happy for two days. (Master and everyone laugh) I've been happy ever since I arrived in Malaysia and heard this story that I think is a very fantastic way to treat others. (Master and everyone laugh)

In Sweden I heard the similar thing. If you don't have a car and you happen to want to drive one, then you take a car

from anyone – don't know who (Laughter) – and drive many miles away to go home or go anywhere you want. Maybe you need the car very desperately. Then when that car owner or the police suddenly catches you at another place and say, “Hey, this is not your car. Give it back!” You just say, “All right,” and give it back to the owner. (Laughter) You are not thus filed for stealing; you're just charged for the benzene you have borrowed from that person to drive from the original scene to that place. The gasoline money you have to pay, and that's all there is.

I thought these two stories are perfect. It makes me feel so happy that one person treats the other as good as himself. To cite a parable: if you don't have money to buy yourself bread, would you beat yourself? Of course not. You would feel even more sympathy for yourself because you haven't got money; you wouldn't blame yourself for anything. So, in this way, the Malaysian people treat others as good as treating themselves; this I completely approve. (Laughter) This was a very good thing I heard in Penang when I came, and it fits very well the Buddhist charity: give it to others whatever you have too much.

In this way, if everyone does that, we don't have any war, and we don't have any robbery. That's how we make peace in the country.

According to Buddhism another way of charity is that you can give, donate your wisdom. For example, if you have become wise in some field or become enlightened, then you must, you should, you ought to, you will have to share this information with others in order to give them the chance, the opportunity to also get enlightenment, liberation, as much as you do. In Buddhism this kind of charity is much praised, is the

highest class of charity.

Now the next one to give charity is giving protection for others. For example, to take vegan diet is also a kind of charity. We give lives to other beings, we give them peaceful and secure feelings instead of frightful feelings. That's what we call in Chinese “Shih Wu W'ei,” which means to give others not-frightful feelings, which is also a kind of charity. Therefore we always advise people if you don't give money, if you don't give any technique, then do give some charity of this “Shih Wu W'ie,” give others security, give others their lives.

Then the next one comes the precepts. The precept is what we say, like in Christianity: do not kill, do not tell a lie, do not steal, do not harm others, and do not take any kind of intoxication harmful either to yourself, your mind or to others, and so on; and love your enemy as much as yourself because Jesus said, *If you love the one who loves you*, then what is that? *It doesn't count anything.*

The Buddhists also emphasize “Jen Ju,” meaning patience – another one of six ways to perfection. Patience means enduring whatever insult, whatever bad feeling or bad treatment people give you. That is patience, endurance. It's similar to the Christian teaching, as Jesus said: *If someone slaps you at the right side, give him the left also.* (Laughter)

Therefore, sometimes on the road to give people the lecture and information we also encounter many obstacles and many problems and many oppositions, but we never take any counter attack. We never do, never ever. It doesn't matter the war has been going on for many years, we never have taken any action against this kind of opposition. We just let things die out themselves. One hand can't clap; it takes two hands.

People say that if they clap one hand they'll get tired. One day they'll find it making no sound and they'll stop. This is the way the Buddha taught us to treat others – love them as your own self. Jesus Christ also taught us the same thing.

If you want to know more about the Five Guidelines (precepts), like not killing, not stealing, etc., you could ask the outside counter to give you some more information. I do not want to give a sermon here about how people should behave, so I make it short, only introducing to you some good things about Buddhism and Christianity, in case you want to pick some for your use.

Now the next one is diligence. What is diligence? To be diligent about what? It means if you resolve to practice, such as to do meditation, then do it diligently every day. If you resolve to keep the precepts – not to tell a lie, not to kill, and to keep vegan diet, etc. – then you should keep on doing it diligently every day. If you want to pray to God to help you, and meditate to receive Hiers Power, then do it every day. Just as you do not forget to eat every day, don't forget to pray; don't forget to meditate every day so that your mentality, your spirit also gets some “food.” Because we are not only the body but also the spiritual being, so we must also take care of our spiritual hunger.

If we do not take care of our spiritual hunger, our life will possibly run into many difficulties, many troubles, and then we blame God, “Why? Why has Hes not been merciful to take care of us?” Hes has; Hes does everything to take care of us. It is we who do not take care of ourselves; it is we who go astray.

Someone asked me yesterday, “Why is it that God is

all-powerful yet creates so many miseries?" God didn't create misery. It is our own human hands that have created all these. God doesn't make guns; God never makes atom bombs. It is we who make these with our own hands. So if we stop that, no more misery. It is we who do not share our properties with our poor neighbors; it is we who are not diligent enough to spread out the Truth, to spread the message of love, of charity, of endurance, of patience, of compassion for others to listen.

If we only stand in some kind of fixed places like the church or the temple to preach, then only a handful of people can listen to us every day, while people outside need even more. People who go to the church already know something, already believe in God, and we should remind them, strengthen their faith in God. People who go to the temple already know about the Buddhism, about the Buddha; already bow to the Buddha and respect the Buddha and try to be good persons. They already know something, and we of course must still remind them each week or each time to strengthen their faith.

The outside people, who never go to the church, never go to the temple, who never know anything else, need our attention even more. So every one of us must bring the message of God, of love, of tolerance, of compassion to other people not only in the church but everywhere in the street, in the restaurant, in the hotel, in the market. We have to always remember; we remember ourselves and remind others.

So it is all our fault. If our world has gone into a very regretful state, it is not with the hand of God. God only makes beauty. God made flowers for us to look at, God made the sun to warm us, to shine our world; God made the rain to fertilize our harvests, God makes all beautiful, shining things for us to

enjoy; God never makes any destructive things. It is only our own doing, our own negative atmosphere that brings all these disasters.

Now the next one comes the “Ch'an Ding” meaning meditation. The Buddha taught us six ways to perfection, and the fifth one is meditation. He didn't only tell us to do charity, to keep the precepts, or to be loving, etc, but also said we have to meditate. Meditation is very important because without meditation we get no wisdom. I have told you yesterday that in the prayer we talk, we ask God, Buddha to help us, to deliver us, to give us some directions. But we only talk and then leave. We don't sit there and receive the instructions. Therefore we get nowhere and we don't get much of the power of blessing from God or from Buddha.

Therefore meditation is very important. Every time after praying, you must sit down for a while and try to receive, to be receptive of the inner messages. Then you will get them. You get them not from voice telling you at your ears, but through intuitive understanding and clear thinking and very peaceful feeling in your heart. That's when your meditation becomes fruitful.

Now, because you do meditation every day, the Buddha said you will get the sixth perfection, and that is the wisdom. Wisdom is not knowledge; wisdom doesn't mean knowledge. Wisdom you cannot learn from books, you can't borrow, you can't steal, you can't buy. Wisdom comes from stilling of the mind, from quietly sitting in meditation every day and receiving instructions from the highest source of the universe. That's what we call wisdom, and this wisdom is difficult to explain, difficult to achieve. It takes perseverance, patience and sincerity through everyday practice, and purification of

the speech, body and mind in order to get it. If we do not purify our speech, body and mind, whatever wisdom we get becomes cloudy with all kinds of worldly influences and worldly instructions and therefore will not be completely pure.

That's why the precept is also very important. We cannot just sit like this every day and be calm and have wisdom. No. We must also prepare the vessel. For example, we cannot just go and get water from any source and drink it. First the cup has to be cleaned. If the cup is not clean, the water will become not clean, or even poisonous – if you drink it might harm you.

Therefore in olden times the Masters who taught meditation were very hard nuts to crack. They didn't teach you but made you do labor work for many years. Have you read the story of Milarepa? If you haven't, go home and read it. As well as story about Tilopa, it is a very famous story. Both persons became great Masters. But before that they had been trained for many years, doing all kinds of hard labor work and enduring all kinds of insults and hard tests from their Masters. Because if we meditate without a sincere motive, without a pure heart and mind, it is very difficult to get pure wisdom.

Many people asked me, “Why? Why do we have to be vegan in order to get initiation from You? Why do we have to be vegans in order to practice this Quan Yin Method?” That is why. Because we need a pure vessel, a pure cup to contain pure water.

Initiation: The Quan Yin Method

Master Ching Hai initiates sincere people longing to know the Truth, into the Quan Yin Method of meditation. The Chinese characters “Quan Yin” mean contemplation of the Sound Vibration. The Method includes meditation on both the inner Light and the inner Sound. These inner visions have been repeatedly described in the spiritual literature of all the world’s religions since ancient times.

For example, the Christian Bible states, **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** (John 1:1) This Word is the inner Sound. It has also been called the Logos, Shabd, Tao, Soundstream, Naam, or the Celestial Music. Master Ching Hai says, **It vibrates within all life and sustains the whole universe. 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 contact with it brings peace and contentment to our hearts. After listening to this Sound, our whole being changes, our entire outlook on life is greatly altered for the better.**

The inner Light, the Light of God, is the same Light referred to in the word “enlightenment.” Its intensity can range

from a subtle glow to the brilliance of many millions of suns. It is through the inner Light and Sound that we come to know God.

The initiation into the Quan Yin Method is not an esoteric ritual or a ceremony for entering a new religion. During the initiation, specific instruction in meditation on the inner Light and inner Sound is given, and Master Ching Hai provides the “Spiritual Transmission.” This first taste of Divine Presence is given in silence. Master Ching Hai need not be physically present in order to open this “door” for you. The Transmission is an essential part of the Method. The technique themselves will bring little benefit without the Grace of the Master.

Because you may hear the inner Sound and see the inner Light immediately upon initiation, this event is sometimes referred to as “sudden” or “immediate enlightenment.”

Master Ching Hai accepts people from all backgrounds and religious affiliations for initiation. You do not have to change your present religion or system of beliefs. You will not be asked to join any organization, or participate in any way that does not suit your current life-style.

However, you will be asked to become a vegan. A lifetime commitment to the vegan diet is a necessary prerequisite for receiving initiation.

The initiation is offered free of charge.

Daily practice of the Quan Yin Method of meditation and the keeping of the Five Guidelines are your only requirements after initiation. Keeping the guidelines prevents you from harming either yourself or any other living being. These practices will deepen and strengthen your initial enlightenment experience,

and allow you to eventually attain the highest levels of awakening or Godhood for yourself. Without daily practice, you will almost certainly forget your enlightenment and return to a normal level of consciousness.

Master Ching Hai's goal is to teach us to be self sufficient. Therefore, She teaches a method that can be practiced by everyone, by themselves, without props or paraphernalia of any kind. She is not looking for followers, worshippers, or disciples, or to establishing an organization with a dues paying membership. She will not accept money, prostrations, or gifts from you, so you do not need to offer these to Her.

She will accept your sincerity in daily life and meditational practice to progress yourself towards Sainthood.

The Five Guidelines

1. Refrain from harming any living being*;
2. Refrain from speaking what is not true;
3. Refrain from taking what is not belonging to oneself;
4. Refrain from sexual misconduct;
5. Refrain from using intoxicants**;

* This guideline requires strict adherence to a vegan diet. No meat, dairy, fish, poultry or eggs (fertilized or non-fertilized).

** This includes avoiding all poisons of any kind, such as alcohol, drugs, tobacco, gambling, pornography and excessively violent films or literature or video games.

“Initiation is not really initiation... you just come here and let me help you help yourself. I have not come here to make you disciples... I have come to help you become Masters.”

~ The Supreme Master Ching Hai

“Everyone already knows how to meditate, but you meditate on the wrong things. Some people meditate on pretty girls, some on money, some on business. Every time you pay full attention, whole-heartedly, to one thing, that is meditation. I pay attention only to the inner Power, to the Compassion, the Love and Mercy qualities of God.”

~ The Supreme Master Ching Hai

“Initiation means the beginning of a new life into a new order. It means that the Master has accepted you to become one of the beings in the circle of Saints. Then you are no longer an ordinary being, you are elevated. In the old times they called it “Baptism” or “Taking Refuge in the Master.”

~ The Supreme Master Ching Hai

Publications

To elevate our spirits and provide inspiration for our daily lives, a rich collection of The Supreme Master Ching Hai's teachings are available in the form of books, videotapes, audiotapes, music cassettes, DVDs, MP3, and CDs.

In addition to the published books and tapes, a diverse array of Master's teachings can also be accessed quickly and free of charge from the Internet. For example, several web sites feature the most frequently published News magazine (see the "Quan Yin Web Sites" section below). Other featured online publications include Master's poetry and inspirational aphorisms, as well as lectures in the form of video and audio files.

Books

Picking up one of Master's books in the middle of a busy day can be a lifesaver. Her words are a clear reminder of our own true Nature. Whether reading Her spiritually informative lectures in The Key of Immediate Enlightenment series or the deeply compassionate poetry contained in Silent Tears, gems of wisdom are always revealed.

In the list of books that follow, available volume numbers for each language are indicated in parentheses. For more information about obtaining these and other books, please see the "Obtaining Publications" section.

The Key of Immediate Enlightenment:

Aulacese(1-15), Chinese(1-10), English(1-5), French(1-2), Finnish(1), German(1-2), Hungarian(1), Indonesian(1-5), Japanese(1-4), Korean(1-11), Mongolian(1,6), Portuguese(1-2), Polish(1-2), Spanish(1-3), Swedish(1), Thai(1-6) and Tibetan(1).

The Key of Immediate Enlightenment - Questions and Answers:

Aulacese(1-4), Chinese(1-3), Bulgarian, Czech, English(1-2), French, German, Hungarian, Indonesian(1-3), Japanese, Korean(1-4), Portuguese, Polish and Russian(1).

Special Edition/Seven-Day retreat in 1992:

English and Aulacese.

The Key of Immediate Enlightenment - Special Edition/1993 World Lecture Tour:

English(1-6) and Chinese (1-6).

Letters Between Master and Spiritual Practitioners:

English(1), Chinese(1-3), Aulacese(1-2), Spanish(1)

My Wondrous Experiences with Master:

Aulacese (1-2), Chinese (1-2)

Master Tells Stories:

English, Chinese, Spanish, Aulacese, Korean, Japanese and Thai.

Coloring Our Lives:

Chinese and English, Aulacese.

God Takes Care of Everything — Illustrated Tales of Wisdom from The Supreme Master Ching Hai:

Aulacese, Chinese, English, French, Japanese and Korean.

The Supreme Master Ching Hai's Enlightening Humor –Your Halo Is Too Tight!

Chinese and English.

Secrets to Effortless Spiritual Practice:

Chinese and English, Aulacese.

God's Direct Contact – The Way to Reach Peace:

Chinese and English.

Of God and Humans – Insights from Bible Stories:

Chinese and English.

The Realization of Health – Returning to the Natural and Righteous Way of Living:

Chinese, English.

I Have Come to Take You Home:

Arabic, Aulacese, Bulgarian, Czech, Chinese, English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Korean, Mongolian, Polish, Spanish, Turkish, Romanian and Russian.

Aphorisms:

Combined volume of English/ Chinese, Spanish/Portuguese, French/German , Japanese/ English, Korean/English, Chinese and English .

The Supreme Kitchen(1) – International Vegetarian Cuisine:

Combined volume of English/Chinese, Aulacese and Japanese.

The Supreme Kitchen(2) – Home Taste Selections:

Combined volume of English/Chinese

One World... of Peace through Music:

Combined volume of English/Aulacese/Chinese.

A Collection of The Art Creation by The Supreme Master Ching Hai-Painting Series:English and Chinese.

S.M.Celestial Clothes:

Combined volume of English/Chinese.

The Dogs in My Life:

Aulacese, Chinese, English, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Polish and German.

The Birds in My Life:

Aulacese, Chinese, English, French, German, Mongolian, Russian, Korean and Indonesian.

The Noble Wilds:

Aulacese, Chinese, English, French and German.

Celestial Art: Chinese, English

From Crisis to Peace: Available in English, Chinese, Korean, French, Indonesian, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Russian and Romanian.

Thoughts on Life and Consciousness

A book written by Dr. Janez: Available in Chinese

Poetry Collections

- Silent Tears: A book of poems written by Master.
Available in English/German/French, English/Chinese, and Aulacese, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Korean and Filipino.
- Wu Tzu Poems: A book of poems written by Master.
Available in Aulacese, Chinese, English
- The Dream of a Butterfly: A book of poems written by Master.
Available in Aulacese, Chinese and English.
- Traces of Previous Lives: A book of poems written by Master.
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- The Old Time: A book of poems written by Master.
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- The Song of Love: (DVD) Aulacese and English
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- The Golden Lotus (poetry recital in Aulacese): CD & DVD
We invite you to listen to the recital of Venerable Thich Man Giac's beautiful poetry, through the melodious voice of Supreme Master Ching Hai, who also recited two of Her own poems, "Golden Lotus" and "Sayonara".
- An Ancient Love (poetry recital in Aulacese): CD & DVD
- Traces of Previous Lives (poetry recital in Aulacese): Audio tapes & CDs 1, 2 & 3, DVDs 1, 2 (with 17 choices of subtitles)
- A Path to Love Legends: Audio tapes & CDs 1, 2 & 3, Video tapes 1 & 2 (poems by distinguished Aulacese poets, recital in Aulacese)

* The poems from "A Path to Love Legends" , "An Ancient Love" , "Beyond the Realm of Time" , "Dream in the Night" , "Please Keep Forever" , "That and This Day" , "Traces of Previous Lives" , "The Jeweled Verses" , "The Golden Lotus" , and "T-L-C, Please" , were recited or set to music and sung by the Poet Herself.

Audio tapes, video tapes, MP3s, CDs and DVDs of The Supreme Master Ching Hai's lectures, music and concerts are available in Arabic, Armenian, Aulacese, Bulgarian, Cambodian, Cantonese, Chinese, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Mandarin, Mongolian, Nepali, Norwegian, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, Turkish and Zulu. Catalogs will be sent upon request. All direct inquiries are welcome.

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The Key of Immediate Enlightenment Sample Booklet presents an introduction to the teachings of Supreme Master Ching Hai. The availability of the Booklet in electronic form allows readers around the world to download it completely free of charge, or read it online wherever the Internet is accessible. From Afrikaans to Zulu, from Bengali to Urdu, in Macedonian, Malay and many others, this gem has been translated into over 75 languages.

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As Supreme Master Ching Hai states, "By attaining inner peace we will attain everything else. All the satisfaction, all the fulfillment of worldly and Heavenly desires comes from the Kingdom of God, the inner realization of our eternal harmony, our eternal wisdom and our almighty power. If we do not get these we never find satisfaction no matter how much money or power, or how high a position we have."

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Access a directory of Quan Yin web sites worldwide, available to browse in many languages, as well as 24-hour access to the TV program, A Journey through Aesthetic Realms. You can download or subscribe to The Supreme Master Ching Hai News, available in eBook or printable format. Multilingual editions of The Key of Immediate Enlightenment sample booklet are also available.

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