



The Supreme Master Ching Hai

The Key of Immediate Enlightenment 3



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# The Importance of Finding an Enlightened Master

Spoken by Supreme Master Ching Hai  
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Thank you for your blessing. My friends, I am happy to be here again. You were very busy and working hard in the daytime, but in the evening you still rushed to come here. I do appreciate your sincerity.

Today I would like to share with you a nice story about how difficult it is to surrender to one's Guru, to one's Master. It is difficult to be a Master. It's more difficult to find a Master. Then it's even more difficult to believe, trust, and surrender to this Master. The story goes like this.

There was a Master who was very perfect, the greatest one, but was not what we'd imagine a "Master" to be. Sometimes he'd scold his students. (Laughter) Yes, he might even beat one or two – just like Milarepa, the great Tibetan yogi and his Master. This Master did all kinds of things that we'd imagine a Master should never do. For example, if we came and said,

“The Master would never get angry,” he would get very angry.

We have to be crazy to be a Master. (Laughter) If you are normal, you cannot be a Master, because in this world everything is opposite, is upside down. What is good, we think is bad. What is bad, we praise and think is good. Only when you are completely enlightened can you see the funny side of all things in this world. Then you can be crazy, very happily crazy – a very balanced craziness.

One day, this “crazy” Master told one of his disciples to take two potatoes and go and eat them. He emphasized again and again that the disciple must eat two potatoes – both of them together. Then he called him again and said, “You must eat two potatoes.”

The disciple took two potatoes from the Master’s hand, went to the street, sat down, and began to eat. Now, it’s very easy to eat two potatoes, no? You would think it’s not a hard test. Anyone can eat two potatoes. So he was eating and asking himself, “What’s the Master up to?”

He was thinking like that. But since he had been following his Master for a very long time, he knew that whatever the Master said, there was a reason and he must obey. So he sat there and ate. Having finished one already, he began to peel the other. Then came a beggar, very hungry, nearly dying, saying, “Please, please give me that potato, because you have eaten one and I’ve had nothing for many days. I’ll die if you don’t give it to me!”

Now, what would you do? Should you surrender to your Master or to compassion? The Master emphasized that he must eat the two potatoes together and the rule is that you never disobey. And the hungry, not to give food to such a hungry person would be very cruel. He sat there, wavering backandforthinhismindbetweenhisMasterandthebeggar. But then the beggar was crying, fell down on the ground, and was nearly dying, so the disciple immediately gave the remaining potato to him. Then he went home and the beggar disappeared also.

HewenthomeandreportedtohisMasterwhathadhappened. The Master scolded and screamed at the disciple. He was screaming out of sorrow because he was feeling sorry for the disciple, not because the disciple had disobeyed him. The second potato was blessed with the highest spiritual enlightenment,completeenlightenment,whilethefirstpotato was blessed with worldly wealth, success and fame. He said, "How stupid you are!" Then he sighed, "Maybe it is your destiny. So poor you couldn't get it!"

After that, the disciple was always successful in the world, gaining a lot of money and fame, but he did not become a Master, meaning he never reached the ultimate goal, the highest position in the universe.

This is the problem with most of us. We think we can handle everything and know everything. We think we don't have any ego. We think it is very easy to follow and surrender to a Master. No, it isn't easy. Even to eat two potatoes you have a

problem. (Laughter)

So, it's hard to dream of doing any other difficult task because we have so many preconceived ideas, we have so many prejudices, social customs and the background education... which have been solidified for many thousands of years. We have been brainwashed with them and it's difficult to wash it out in a short time.

We always think we know all that is right and wrong. What do these prejudices have to do with our enlightenment? They obstruct our way. Whenever the Master tells us to do one thing, we do the other thing because we think, "No, no, I know it. My mother told me so, my teacher in school told me this, and my priest in the church has told me that."

We do exactly the opposite of what the Master desires us to do, and the Master always has to struggle with our prejudice. Most of us are blind, deaf and dumb. Only the Master can see clearly. The rest of the people see only in a hazy way or half way, or do not see at all. We think we see, but we don't. We think we understand, but we do not. It is truly great, the illusion of this world. It is truly amazing, the great work of Maya.

It cheats us into believing in anything that we should not believe. We follow it very faithfully, very nicely and obediently until the one who is awakened, enlightened comes along to shake us out of this illusion. But even then, we don't wake up so quickly. Just as in the morning, the alarm clock rings but you say, "Ah... oh...," and it keeps on ringing. Then

you turn it off and go back to sleep.

That is why we have so many religions and we have so many so-called paths to liberation. But what do we see? Our world is more and more populated every day. That means, from our world, no one has been liberated – or very few. Otherwise, why hasn't the population decreased? If many had been liberated and gone Home – become angels, become God's assistants, God's sons and daughters and lived in paradise forever – then the world would be less populated.

So, it is difficult to gain liberation unless you find a perfect, enlightened Master who knows the way back to the Kingdom of God; someone as great as Jesus, someone as great as Buddha, or other great Masters in the past like Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu, Krishna, Socrates, etc. Otherwise we are also doing something, but we won't get there. We just walk around on the different roads. We walk all right, but not on the right road. Sometimes we think we are walking, but then we end up going back to where we started. Therefore it is difficult to know the way on our own, unless by God's grace we can find a completely enlightened Master.

When Jesus was alive He said, I am the Way. I am the Light of the world, but He added, as long as I am in the world. And Buddha also said, If you do not believe in Buddha, you are "echantika." Meaning you are at hazard and you could not be liberated. But They said so when They were alive. What They said was true and is true with any real Master who still walks the Earth.

Now I will tell you how to become a Master. Since it's so difficult to find a Master, we might just as well become the Master ourselves; it's safer. So whenever we see a Master, we must ask to become a Master, and not for any other things. When Buddha came to this world, He said He had come to make everyone understand the way of a Master, which means how to become a Master. Jesus also said, Whoever believes me shall not walk in darkness, and then He said, Whatever miracle I do today, you can do also. Buddha also said, I have become Buddha, and you will become Buddha. "Buddha" means an enlightened Master. It comes from the Sanskrit root word "Bodhi," which means wisdom. Someone who has Bodhi is "Buddha," meaning someone who is enlightened, is an enlightened Master.

Why is it called "enlightened"? Because when you are enlightened you have Light; you have Light inside you, outside you and in the whole universe all is your Light. Your Light is even so great that it shines outside, that even some people can see the Light around you. Therefore you see Jesus, Buddha and the great Saints all had the Light around Them, a halo around Them. So this is what it means by being "enlightened."

So if you want to become a Master, you must have Light, you must be "enlightened," that's the first condition. Then you must know two kinds of "samadhi," meaning deep rooted bliss within yourself. When you are in the real samadhi it offers you wisdom and bliss, and when you are out of samadhi you'll give this bliss and wisdom to the world, to whoever needs you

or comes near to you. Some Masters are deep in samadhi, and they don't go out to teach the world; and some good disciples of good Masters can also be in samadhi when they are near the Master or when they meditate.

Now, when you are in this kind of samadhi, which is very deep and profound, you don't even know that you have a body, nor do you know how to function in this world. For example, in the middle of cooking you might just drop into samadhi, leaving your pan burning without being aware of it at all. (Laughter) Or some people might beat you and you don't feel any pain, or they might scold you but you still embrace them and kiss them. (Laughter) Yes, because you are oblivious to any differentiations in this world; bad or good, ugly or beautiful, you have no discrimination. You don't even need to eat for many days, many months or many years; you don't feel any desire and any necessity, and you don't even feel that you need to help anyone. You feel everyone is happy and contented because you yourself are happy and contented, and you feel the whole world is in bliss.

Some of my disciples have had many experiences of this kind of samadhi, and it's bad for me because it's hard to work with them when they are like this. (Master demonstrates) When I called them they would answer, "Yes, Master." And then when I told them to do something, they would also answer, "Yes." But then they just sat there without moving one inch. What would you do? So I would scold them out of that samadhi, or beat them out of it. Otherwise they would get attached to it and forget their families, forget that their wives and their kids

were hungry, and forget every suffering being who needs their help. Because, truly, even if we are in a blissful state, there are many others who suffer.

So, this kind of samadhi seems good, but is not as good as the other one. There's another kind of samadhi. Actually there are many kinds of, but I will just mention the two typical ones which you will know when you become a Master or near mastership. I mean the real Master, the powerful one, the one who is one with God, not just the so-called "Master" that we have so many of nowadays. The real Masters are like Jesus and Buddha.

When Buddha sat under the tree before He went out to teach the world, He experienced the first kind of samadhi. He sat forty-nine days without moving. Before Jesus went out to preach the Truth He also had this kind of samadhi. He sat in the desert for 40 days without eating, moving, or drinking. Before Mohammed went out to help the public, He sat in the cave and also experienced this kind of smadhi. But then They had to leave it, because when They began to enjoy it and felt attached to it, God sent someone down and said, "No, no, no. You wake up and go and save the world!"

After that, They also had to meditate every day. But They had another kind of samadhi, the normal state of samadhi: you are in samadhi twenty-four hours but you are out of samadhi twenty-four hours; you are in bliss but you are in the world at the same time. Otherwise you cannot help the world. This is the highest samadhi, and hard to obtain. It's already hard to

obtain the first samadhi, how much harder to attain the second!

With the first samadhi you are in bliss, but you couldn't function, and you couldn't teach people because you don't care about teaching. You just enjoy yourself. Even if you want to, you just feel you cannot function, you can't cope with the worldly ways of working and thinking. But to be a Master and save other beings, to help them liberate themselves, you need both samadhi and the function of the mind. Samadhi gives you inner Power so that you can bestow blessings on whomever you wish to, or whomever needs you. Without samadhi you cannot bless anyone, you cannot help or assist them, you cannot be omnipresent, meaning to be in many places at the same time. However, without the normal function of the mind you can't understand, you can't communicate with normal, suffering sentient beings. So you need both and at the same time. This is the most difficult part.

Therefore in the world there are not many Masters, because of this difficulty, to be in the world but not to be in the world, to be in samadhi but not to be in samadhi. This also makes it difficult for us to find the real Masters because they are not those who are in the first type of samadhi, they are not those who we can tell immediately from the outlook are in samadhi. These Masters may not even look saintly. They may not be surrounded by people throwing flowers around them and worshipping them so that they'll open the eyes and say, "Oh, blessed are you!"

Those of the first type samadhi are Saints, holy beings, who

also deserve our worship. It's very difficult to become such a Saint, because when we ordinary people meditate, we can't even go into samadhi, we can't forget the world. Even if we run into the jungle our minds are still tumbling with all kinds of thinking, all kinds of struggles and difficulties. So when we see someone always in deep samadhi, looking so sweet and always smiling, and blessing us, we think he is fantastic. It's difficult to experience such deep samadhi even just for one or five minutes.

Therefore those who have achieved this kind of samadhi, this state of tranquility, are great Saints who have great power, control, over their minds. But it's even more difficult to be in samadhi and to be in the world at the same time, to have this inner tranquility but also have the outer functioning to deal with all types of people in order to pull them out of their illusion. This is the state of a perfect enlightened Master like Jesus, Buddha, etc.

Therefore it's difficult to become a Master, and it is also difficult to judge a Master. Because if a Master exists in the world, then he has to deal with all kinds of people, all kinds of temperaments, all kinds of mental obstructions and then accordingly gives different remedies. He looks like an ordinary person then. If some disciple needs scolding, then the Master gives scolding; if another disciple needs love, then the Master gives love. They both receive love, but in different boxes, in different covers. Hugging is love in one kind of "wrapping paper," and scolding is also love in another kind of "wrapping paper." And then because we are not so

enlightened, we don't see anything special about that type of Master. We don't see the Master sitting for hours, deep in samadhi; we don't see the Master as we imagine, always sweet and smiling and saying soothing words. We see the Master acting just like an ordinary person and then we think the Master is still ordinary, from his ordinary reactions. But a real Master's reactions are never, never ordinary.

Do you remember the story about the two potatoes? If we are not somewhat enlightened and it's the first time we see a Master or we have only followed a Master for a short time, and the Master gives us two potatoes, telling us to eat them all, and even repeats that order three or four times, then what would we think? We would think that it's strange, "At home, I myself have so many potatoes. I've come to Master for great blessing and spiritual wealth, but here he gives me two potatoes!"

Then we would probably turn around and say, "Potatoes! I don't even like potatoes. How can he be an enlightened Master if he doesn't know I don't like potatoes? He can't even read my mind, and what a fuss about two potatoes! Why does he keep telling me three or four times to eat them together? I know how to eat potatoes." Yes, we would argue back and forth like that. But we don't know the meaning of these two potatoes.

When the Master gives us something with love and blessing, we have everything in that gift. It is not a potato any more; it's a world of wealth, a world of spiritual power. In Formosa

and other places my disciples who know this always grasp whatever I give them; they always receive whatever I give them with great happiness. So sometimes when we go out together, they also expect me to give them something, maybe a peanut, maybe a candy. Whatever is there we share it together and they are so happy about that.

But sometimes when we are outside, there are also other people who will gather around us; because they see so many people gathering, and taking something, so they also come and ask for whatever it is. Although these people are not initiates, when they ask, I also give them. For me, there's no difference between initiates and non-initiates; they are all Gods. But then it's interesting to watch their reactions, which are always the same. They will take my candies or peanuts, and then look puzzled, maybe thinking. "Why? A peanut? I've plenty of them at home!" or something like that. Or they might throw them back. (Laughter)

Therefore sometimes I am reluctant to give things in public, or sometimes when the disciples asked for a blessing in public I also refused, to avoid the situation that other people might have any ungrateful or critical thought in their mind, which is not good for them. This is nothing to me, but it might give them some obstructions for the future, which we call "Yei Tsang" in Chinese or "karmic hindrance" in Sanskrit and it means that any bad or good deed you do will obstruct you.

Since it's so difficult to become a Master, what shall we do? In my posters and leaflets we always say "Immediate

Enlightenment” and “Get Eternal Liberation in This Lifetime.”

We don't say “Become a Master in One Lifetime.” We can also become a Master, no doubt, but it's more difficult. So, at least we can be liberated and enlightened; we can reach near mastership, Master's state, sainthood, Bodhisattva-hood, and that is also OK. No? Otherwise we have no hope.

In India people often say that if a Master could have a successor in his lifetime, then he is already very, very lucky. In America there was a Master, Yogananda, from India, who was very famous when alive and is still famous now, but he had no successor. Understand that? It means none of his disciples or followers were equal to his status. No one was equal to his state of enlightenment. Yes.

So, it is not difficult to be liberated, but it is difficult to become perfectly enlightened. It is difficult to become a Buddha, a Master, a Christ. But we have hope. Yes. I only say it's difficult; it doesn't mean impossible. Whether it's difficult or not is all up to us. If only we could believe in a Master, follow and completely surrender to that perfect Master, we would become that Master. The most difficult part is to surrender, because we all have this ego “I can do this thing and I understand that thing.” This ego is the worst enemy of our wisdom, of our mastership. It's difficult to kill this ego. It is very easy to control others but not easy to control ourselves. That's why it's said that: “The man who can conquer his mind has the best victory.”

But we can do this through meditation with the Quan Yin Method which I will teach you. Then slowly this Quan Yin Method of liberation, the inner Energy of God will cleanse our obstructions, will cleanse our preconceived ideas, and set us free. We will become "no one." We will have no thirst for fame, wealth and power. The pains, sorrows and happiness of the world will still be there, but they will not affect us. We have everything, but then we have nothing, we are attached to nothing. We become like an empty vessel, only full of God's wisdom and God's love. Only when we are empty can God fill us with wisdom and love. If we are still someone, if we still have something, then we cannot be completely empty, then we cannot completely have all of God's power, which He wants to fill us with. Understand?

So, that's how we can become a Master: by first becoming no one, nobody, nothing. As Jesus said: Except you become a child, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God; and as Lao Tzu said: We have to become children again. They both said the same thing.