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OF WISDOM

TEACHINGS FROM VENERABLE MASTER CHIN KUNG

- Buddhism is an education, not a religion. We do not worship the Buddha, we respect him as a teacher. His teachings enable us to escape from suffering and attain happiness.
- What does Buddha mean? "Buddha" means enlightenment or understanding. Complete understanding is when one realizes the truth about life and the universe. It is when one is apart from all delusions.
- Cultivation is not something unusual, but part of our everyday life. Whenever we recognize and correct our faults, we are cultivating.
- "What goes around comes around." "Treat others the way we would like to be treated." If we want world peace for future generations and ourselves we should refrain from erroneous acts and cultivate kindness.
- Success is reached only after over-coming great obstacles.
- We should not be afraid to see our faults and mistakes because only then can they be corrected. People who fail to see their own mistakes will not be able to change for

the better.

- Seeing another's fault is the greatest fault in itself.
- We should treat all people with respect and sincerity and be responsible for our actions and careful when handling other's property. Be conservative with speech and actions to avoid harming others.
- Listen more; speak less.
- Filial piety and respect are the roots of good conduct.
- To often criticize others is not a good matter. We should instead try to see their good points.
- Practising virtue is to keep a kind heart, speak kind words and do kind acts to benefit others.
- We should truly believe in the existence of heaven and hell. If we practise kind deeds, our future will be in heaven. If we commit evil acts, our future will be in hell.
- When we are jealous of others, we only harm ourselves in the process.
- Wisdom is essential if we truly wish to propagate the Teachings and benefit living beings. Do not use emotions when helping others, use wisdom and be reasonable. If we use emotions when dealing with people and matters, it often makes a good thing go bad.

- A wise mind is like a mirror, reflecting and perceiving everything clearly.
- Life is short and fragile, why not cultivate kindness instead of committing acts which cause harm to living beings and to oneself?
- To help others is to help ourselves.
- To respect others is to respect ourselves.
- The key to success is diligence.
- Peace of the world is based on peace in the family.
- We should truly believe in the existence of heaven and hell. If we practise kind deeds, our future will be in heaven. If we commit evil acts, our future will be in hell.
- Worries arise from the mind. It would be wise to not let things worry us. Nothing and no one can make us worry without our permission.
- If we wish to bring peace to the world, we must start by changing our erroneous ways. World peace stems from inner peace.
- We must cleanse ourselves of greed, anger and ignorance. These three poisons are the roots behind all our sufferings.

BUDDHISM IS AN EDUCATION



Buddhism is an education about our living environment and us. The Buddha teaches us to recognize ourselves; our thoughts, speech, and actions and the consequences they evoke. Most importantly, the Buddha wants us to restore our original and complete wisdom. He teaches that everyone possesses the ability to attain complete understanding of life and the universe, and it is only because of delusion that we are unable to realize it. We are blinded by discrimination, wandering thoughts and attachments, and forget the original pure mind of our True Nature. In this way, we have caused ourselves much unneeded suffering.

The Buddha also teaches us to view our environment clearly. Environment refers to the people, matters, and objects we come across everyday. When our hearts are free from discriminatory thoughts and attachments, we will be able to view everything clearly and deal with them appropriately. Thus, we can live in harmony with others and succeed in all our endeavors.

What did the Buddha mean when he taught us to cultivate? His intent was mainly to rid us of our delusions and attachments. If we drew together the Six Principles of practice taught by the Buddha, we would only end up with the practice of giving. Giving simply means to let go. If we can let go of our greed, anger, ignorance and arrogance, then we would always dwell in purity of mind. If we can let go of

all discriminations, worries and attachments, then we would attain peace, spiritual liberation, health and longevity. If we can let go of our own views and work together for the benefit of others, then we can achieve harmony with others, harmony in society, and ultimately, world peace. From this, we can see that the main practice of the Buddha's teachings is none other than giving.

When Buddha Shakyamuni was in the world, he not only used words to teach, but made an example of himself for all living beings to follow. He let go of all desires, worldly enjoyments, fame and wealth to lead the life of a left-home person. He lived a life of simplicity, purity of mind and body, and happiness. Ordinary people might see this as bitter and miserable, but this is only due to their lack of understanding. One with wisdom would view things differently. The wise would see the Buddha's life as one of true liberation, happiness and fulfillment. The Buddha does not have useless thoughts, discriminations, attachments, or worries. How at ease he is! He accords with all conditions and emanates wisdom in every thought and action to teach sentient beings in this world.

The Buddhas live lives of wisdom, while ordinary people live lives of affliction. Buddha Shakyamuni's teachings show us how to change afflicted lives into ones of great wisdom. From these teachings, we will learn how to restore the ultimate and complete wisdom and abilities of our True Nature; allowing us to attain true happiness and prosperity. This is the Buddha's Education.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



Question. How do we purify our minds so we can remain forever young?

Answer. This is a good question. The sutras tell us that anything that has a physical image is unreal. We can apply these physical images, but we cannot foster attachments for them. Attachments create impurity in our mind, deterring us from achieving enlightenment. This applies to all forms of practice in Buddhism. Even the Pure Land School, which many agree is the easiest to practise, requires that although one who wishes to be born into the Pure Land can take their remaining karma with them, they cannot have any existing worries or attachments. Therefore, a person with worries or attachments cannot transcend the cycle of birth and death. Life becomes harder as we pass through the cycles of rebirth.

Up until 1995, the only attachment I had left was for my ninety-one year old mother, who lived in China. When I met with her about ten years earlier in Hong Kong, I persuaded her to practise the Buddha Name Chanting Method. When I spoke with her on the telephone several years ago, she still had strong attachments for her sons and grandchildren. Not until a year ago did she finally let go of all attachments. She told me that she had seen Buddha Amitabha twice and Guan Yin Bodhisattva once. In addition, she had prior knowledge of when she would be leaving this world. On May 29, 1995, she passed on and was born into the Western Pure Land.

At her funeral, people were aware of a radiant glow and a pleasing yet unfamiliar fragrance. Her complexion appeared similar to that of a live person. After eight days, her body was still soft. Upon her cremation, more than three hundred sharira, or relics, were found. All this is evidence that she had been successfully born into the Pure Land.

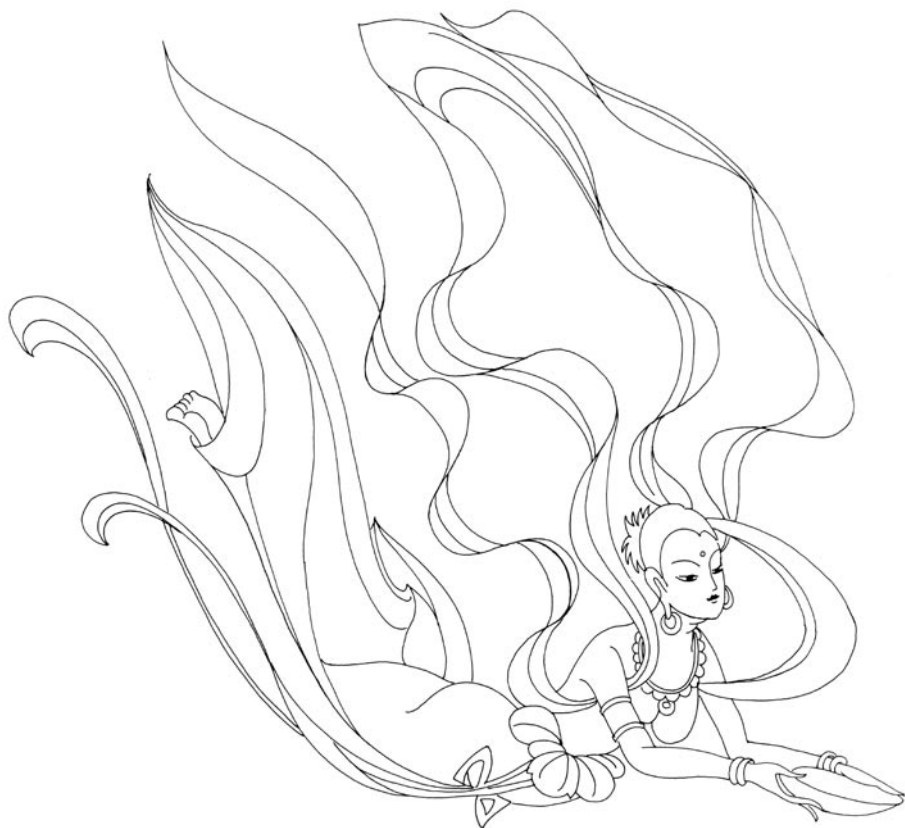
In conclusion, once we are rid of worries and attachments we can go to the Western Pure Land whenever we wish. By maintaining a pure, non-discriminating, compassionate and kind heart, one holds the key to remaining youthful.

Question. The Buddha taught us not to kill, but what should we do about insects such as mosquitoes and flies?

Answer. The Buddha not only taught us to protect all animals, but also plants. Even plants have lives and grow with dignity. Therefore, unless there is absolutely no space for us to walk around them, we should not step on them because that behavior is an insult and disrespectful to the plants.

Normally, when a tree is as tall as human, there is a tree spirit. In ancient times, monks often lived in mountain huts. Three days before they cut a tree to build the hut, they would respectfully tell of their intention and ask the tree spirit to move to a safe place. This method can be applied to insects. In order to keep our houses and environment clean and our family healthy, we can stand in front of a statue of the Buddha

or Bodhisattva three days before our actions and ask the insects to move. Some people who have done so with sincere and kind hearts have received good results.



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