

Pratyutpanna Samadhi

IBDSCL, May 26th and 27th , by Nancy Yu

Good morning! Welcome to the International Buddha Dharma Society for Cosmic Law to listen to today's Dharma talk. Last week, we talked about how to deepen Samadhi power. Get rid of false thoughts, discriminations and attachments. Contemplate that all five Skandhas are empty. Contemplate that there is "No I, no others, no living beings and no longevity". Contemplate that I am ONE with the universe, I am ONE with the nature, I am ONE with the living beings, I am ONE with the Buddha-Heart and Nature-Ocean, I am ONE with all the Buddhas and Tathagatas and I am ONE with all the living beings. Contemplate that I am the universe and the universe is me; I am the Buddha-Heart and the Nature-Ocean and the Buddha-Heart and the Nature-Ocean is me; I am the living beings and the living beings are me; I am All and All are me. Bring out the Bodhi Heart, repent, keep vegetarian diet, hold precepts, chant the name of the Buddha, recite sutras and hold mantras. All these are supreme wonderful dharmas to cultivate Samadhi.

I would like to share a story with you first. The name of the story is 'the Old Monk in Samadhi'. The story will further help you understand what is true Samadhi.

In Ming Dynasty, there was an Emperor who was going to the temple on the Zi Jing Mountain to pray. It was a snowing winter day and there was white snow everywhere except one patch of the ground where there was not even a little bit of snow. The Emperor felt this was so strange and he asked, "Why is there no snow here in this snowing day? By the Emperor was Chan Master Baozheng and he said, "Your Majesty, there is somebody under the ground." The emperor then asked, "How long has the person been under there?" Chan Master Baozheng answered, "It's been seven, eight years." The Emperor asked, "Is he still alive?" Master said, "Yes, he is still alive." The Emperor was shocked and he sent people to dig the ground and found that there was

really a bhikṣu meditating in a big jar. The Emperor named him Master Dengguang. Master Baozheng waked Master Dengguang out from his Samadhi with inverted bell and he then came out from the jar.

The Emperor asked Master Baozheng, “Dengguang Master can stay in Samadhi for seven, eight years under the ground. He must have been free from birth and death cycling.” Master Baozheng shook his head and said, “No, he has not!” The Emperor could not believe that and Master Baozheng saw that the Emperor had doubts and he said, “If Your Majesty does not believe, you may host a banquet tonight for Dengguang Master. At dinner, you put a silver bowl and a pair of silver sticks in front of Dengguang Master and a golden bowl and a pair of golden sticks in front of me. After dinner, you give him two silver ingots and give me two golden ingots. Watch him carefully and see the changes on his face.” The Emperor did according to what Master Baozheng said. At first, Dengguang Master was very respectful to Master Baozheng until he saw that the Emperor showed more respect to Baozheng Master than to him. He was annoyed and he thought that the Emperor looked down on him. He thought, “I have been in Samadhi for over seven years and the Emperor only offered me a silver bowl, silver sticks and silver ingots. What capability does this Master Baozheng have so that the Emperor is so respectful to him and offered him a golden bowl, golden sticks and two golded ingots.” When thinking about this, his face was ugly. Then the Emperor believed Master Baozheng’s words.

Although, Master Dengguang was able to be in Samadhi for seven, eight years, his ignorance, annoyances were still there and were not cut off. His bad habits were not corrected. There was still pride in his mind. False thoughts, discriminations and attachments still existed. The five poisons were not cleaned up. His Samadhi power was not deep and firm enough and the fire in his mind still rose up in his heart.

In daily life, we should observe our mind, be conscious of our bad habits and correct them. Pursue the supreme Bodhi with wisdom, transform countless living beings with compassion, cultivate all the paramitas and expect to achieve the Buddha fruit in the future. These are the pure karma to become a Buddha.

The Buddha gave many sutras of various of samadhis, for example, *the Sutra on the Samadhi of Sitting Meditation*, *the Gara Sutra on the Samadhi of observing the Buddha*, *the Sutra on the Samadhi of the Diamond*, *the Sutra of the Samadhi of Bodhisattvas Chanting the Name of the Buddha*, *the Sutra of the Samadhi of Saddharma Pundarika*, *the Sutra of the Samadhi of Illusion*, *the Sutra of the Samadhi of Gathering all the Blessings*, *the Sutra of the Samadhi of the Buddha Stamp*, *the Sutra of the Shurangama Samadhi*, *the Sutra of the Pratyutpanna Samadhi*, and so on. In the sutra *the Buddha Speaks the Ultimate Extinction of the Dharma Sutra*, it says that when the Dharma is about to extinguish, *the Shurangama Sutra* and *the Pratyutpanna Samadhi Sutra* will be the first ones to change and then to disappear. The twelve divisions of the canon will gradually follow until they vanish completely, never to appear again. Their words and texts will be totally unknown ever after." *The Pratyutpanna Samadhi Sutra* mentioned here, is also named '*the Samadhi of all the Buddhas of the Ten Directions Standing in front of one*'. Today, we will learn the first part of this sutra together.

Thus I have heard:

At one time the Buddha was in the Karaṇḍa Bamboo Garden of the city of Rājagṛha, together with an innumerable multitude of great Bodhisattvas, bhikṣus, bhikṣuṇīs, upāsakas, and upāsikās, as well as gods, dragons, asuras, yakṣas, garuḍas, kiṃnaras, and mahoragas. All were seated in the huge assembly.

At that time Bhadrāpāla Bodhisattva rose from his seat, arranged his attire, and fell on his knees. He joined his palms and asked the Buddha, "I would like to ask some questions.

May I have Your permission to ask them now?”

The Buddha replied, “Very good! Ask any questions as you wish. I will answer them to you.”

Bhadrupāla Bodhisattva asked the Buddha, “What dharms should Bodhisattvas practice in order to develop wisdom, like the immense ocean accepting myriad streams? What should they do in order to acquire broad knowledge and understand what they have heard without doubts? What should they do in order to know their past lives and whence they have come to reborn? What should they do in order to live a long life? What should they do in order to be reborn into a family with a great name and to be loved and respected by their parents, siblings, relatives, and friends? What should they do in order to be endowed with even, comely features? What should they do in order to acquire excellent talents, to be outstanding in the multitudes, and to develop superb, all-encompassing wisdom? What should they do in order to acquire the merit and wisdom required for Buddhahood, to achieve immeasurable awesome power, and to adorn their magnificent Buddha Lands? What should they do in order to subjugate hostile mārās? What should they do in order to achieve command so that their vows will never fail? What should they do in order to enter the Door of Total Retention? What should they do in order to acquire the transcendental powers to travel to Buddha Lands everywhere? What should they do in order to acquire the bold valor of a lion, with nothing to fear, unmovable by mārās? What should they do in order to realize their holy Buddha nature and to accept and uphold the Dharma in the sūtras with understanding, not forgetting anything? What should they do in order to achieve self-fulfillment, free from sycophancy and flattery and unattached to the Three Realms of Existence? What should they do in order to be free from hindrances and to acquire the overall wisdom-knowledge, never deviating from the Buddha’s intention? What should they do in order to win people’s trust? What should they do in order to acquire the eight tones [of a Buddha] and sound 10,000 koṭi tones? What should they do in order to acquire the sublime appearance [of a Buddha]? What should they do in order to acquire the power of

all-hearing? What should they do in order to acquire the bodhi-eye to see into the future? What should they do in order to acquire the Ten Powers and true wisdom? What should they do in order to see, in a single thought, Buddhas from worlds in the ten directions all standing before them? What should they do in order to know that the four appearances of every dharma have no reality? What should they do in order to see in this world innumerable Buddha Lands in the ten directions and to know the good and evil life-journeys of the people, gods, dragons, spirits, and wriggly insects in those lands? These are my questions. I pray that the Buddha will explain to me and resolve all my doubts.”

The Buddha told Bhadrapāla, “Very good! Your questions are so comprehensive that they are beyond measure. You can ask these questions because you have acquired merit in your past lives under past Buddhas; because you have made offerings to Buddhas, delighted in the Dharma in the sūtras, observed your precepts, and lived in purity; because you have always begged for food, not accepting meal invitations, convened assemblies of Bodhisattvas, taught people to stop doing evil, and seen the equality of all; and because you have always had great lovingkindness and great compassion. Your merit is beyond measure.”

The Buddha told Bhadrapāla, “There is a samādhi called *Buddhas from Worlds in the Ten Directions All Standing before One*. If you can practice this dharma, you will have the answers to all your questions.”

Bhadrapāla said to the Buddha, “I pray that You will pronounce it. What the Buddha will now pronounce is all-encompassing. It will give peace to [sentient beings in worlds in] the ten directions and provide great illumination to Bodhisattvas.”

The Buddha told Bhadrapāla, “There is a samādhi called *Concentrated Mind*. Bodhisattvas should constantly guard, learn, and uphold it, never to follow other ways. Of all virtuous ways, this is the foremost one.”

The Buddha told Bhadrapāla, “If Bodhisattvas aspire to attain this samādhi quickly, they should stand in great faith. Those who train themselves in accordance with the Dharma can attain this samādhi. Do not raise any doubts, even as slight as a hair. This Dharma of Concentrated Mind is also called the Bodhisattva Way Surpassing All Other Ways.”

[Then the Buddha spoke in verse:]

With a single thought, believe in this Dharma.

Following the teachings heard, think only of one object.

Keep only one thought, ceasing all other thoughts.

Stand firm in your faith, without any doubts.

Progress energetically, never negligent or indolent.

Think of neither existence nor nonexistence, neither progress nor regress.

Think of neither front nor back, neither left nor right.

Think of neither nonexistence nor existence, neither far nor near.

Think of neither pain nor itch, neither hunger nor thirst.

Think of neither cold nor hot, neither pain nor pleasure.

Think of neither birth nor old age, neither illness nor death.

Think of neither body nor life, nor longevity.

Think of neither wealth nor poverty, neither nobility nor lowliness.

Think of neither sense objects nor desires.

Think of neither large nor small, neither long nor short.

Think of neither beauty nor ugliness.

Think of neither evil nor good, neither anger nor delight.

Think of neither rising nor sitting, neither proceeding nor stopping.

Think of neither the sūtras nor the Dharma.

Think of neither right nor wrong, neither grasping nor abandoning.

Think of neither perception nor consciousness.

Think of neither cessation nor continuation.

Think of neither emptiness nor true reality.

Think of neither heavy nor light, neither hard nor easy.

Think of neither deep nor shallow, neither broad nor narrow.

Think of neither father nor mother, neither wife nor children.

Think of neither friends nor acquaintances, neither love nor hatred.

Think of neither gain nor loss, neither success nor failure.

Think of neither clarity nor turbidity.

Cease all thoughts and be vigilant for a given period of time, never distracted.

Progress energetically, never negligent or indolent.

Do not count the years, nor feel tired in a single day.

Hold one thought, never losing it.

Avoid sleep and keep the mind alert.

Always live alone and avoid gatherings.

Shun evil ones but stay near beneficent friends.

Serve illuminated teachers, regarding them as Buddhas.

Hold firm your resolve, but always be gentle.

Meditate on the equality of all things.

Avoid your hometown and keep away from relatives.

Abandon love and desire and live in purity.

Meditate on that which is asaṃskṛta and cease desires.

Drop distracting thoughts and learn the way of concentration.

Gain wisdom from words in accord with dhyāna.

Remove the three afflictions and purify the six faculties.

Cease lustful pursuits and leave sensory pleasures behind.

Do not be greedy for wealth or accumulate things.

Know contentment in eating and do not covet flavors.

Take care never to eat any sentient being [dead or alive].

Dress in accordance with the Dharma, and do not be ornately adorned.

Do not tease others, nor be proud or arrogant.

Do not be conceited, nor elevate yourself.

Expound sūtras in accordance with the Dharma.

Understand that the body has always been like an illusion.

Do not be engrossed by the [five] aggregates, nor revel in the sensory fields.

The five aggregates are like thieves, and the four domains are like snakes.

All are impermanent and all are unstable.

Recognize that there has never been an everlasting ruler in one,

Only convergence and divergence of causes and conditions.

Understand and know that nothing in existence is real.

Bestow lovingkindness and sympathy on all.

Give alms to the poor and relief to the unfortunate.

This is meditative concentration in the Bodhisattva Way, which

Will unfold the fundamental wisdom and elicit myriads of wisdom-knowledge.

The Buddha told Bhadrapāla, “One who trains in this way will attain the samādhi in which present Buddhas all stand before one. If, among bhikṣus, bhikṣuṇīs, upāsakas, and upāsikās, there are those who want to train according to this Dharma, they should fully observe their precepts and live alone in a place to think of Amitābha Buddha, who now is in the west. According to the teachings heard, one should also think of His land called Sukhāvatī, which is ten million koṭi Buddha Lands away from here. One should

single-mindedly contemplate for one day and one night, or even seven days and seven nights. After the seventh day, one will see Him. By analogy, one sees things in a dream, not knowing whether it is day or night, indoors or outdoors, and one's sight is impervious to darkness or obstructions.

Amitabha! Due to time limit, we shall stop here for today. You may go back and read through this sutra from the beginning to the end. The merit is boundless. Without any attachment, without any discrimination, recite the name of the Buddha with a concentrated heart, then you will see the Buddha! Thank you! See you next time!