

Walk with Wisdom

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Good morning! Welcome to International Buddha Dharma Society for Cosmic Law to listen to today's Dharma talk. This is the last talk on WISDOM. Human body is difficult to obtain and we have obtained it; Dharma is difficult to hear and we have heard it. If we still don't practice diligently to get liberated, then how long are we going to wait for?

According to Saṃyukta Āgama, Volume XV, one time, the Buddha gave a lecture to his disciples about how difficult to obtain a human body,

"It's like when the earth all becomes oceans, one immortal blind tortoise, every one hundred years, it sticks its head out of its shell. In the ocean, there is a floating log which has a hole in the middle. This log floats in the waves and so it has no fixed place. When the blind tortoise sticks out his head every hundred years, would its head touch the hole?"

Ananda answered, "No, World Honored One. Why? Because if the blind tortoise is in the east of the ocean, the floating log could have floated to the west, south, north with waves, or maybe it's just floating around. So, it is too difficult to meet."

The Buddha instructed his disciples, "The blind tortoise and the floating log, even if floating in different directions, still have chances to meet. For the ignorant worldly beings, however, if drifting in the realm of heaven, the realm of Asura, the realm of animal, the realm of ghost and the realm of hell, to restore the human body, it would be even more difficult than the blind tortoise to meet the floating log. Why? Because the ignorant worldly ordinary beings don't practice the Dharma. They don't do good deeds; they are not honest; they kill each other; they pray on weak ones; therefore, they have created boundless karmas. So, Bhikkhus, if you don't understand the Four Noble Truth, you should practice diligently, bring out the heart to go forward and don't get stuck in greed, anger and ignorant.

The Buddha once also expounded, "Those who obtain their human body are like the earth in hand, and those who lose their human body are like the earth on the ground. "

In the Nirvana Sutra, the Buddha also said that to obtain the human body was just like spreading beans to the wall and none would stay.

So, we know that it is rare to obtain this human body and we should all deeply realize this and make good use of our human body.

Why it's said that it is difficult to hear the Dharma? For example, for living beings in the three evil realms, because they have heavy karmic obstruction, it's difficult for them to hear the Dharma. For living beings in the heavenly realm, due to their huge blessings, they are unlikely to practice Dharma and so they cannot get liberated from birth and death. For beings in the Asura realm, they like to fight and so far from Dharma.

In the six realms, human is the one more likely to cultivate because there are both happiness and bitterness in the human realm. To get rid of bitterness and obtain more happiness, they will make their efforts and it's likely for them to meet and practice Buddha Dharma for liberation. Even so, there are few people who could hear Dharma, let alone those who are truly practicing.

Buddha Dharma is difficult to hear. In sutras, there are several stories about how Buddha Shakyamuni pursued Dharma in his previous lives. In the **Nirvana Sutra**, it says:

Countless kalpas ago when there was no Buddha Dharma, at that time, Buddha Shakyamuni was a Bramin who had high character and was different from others. He decided to pursue Buddha Dharma. At that time, one heaven king saw this and he wanted to test this Bramin if his heart was sincere. So, he changed into a Rathar Ghost which was terrifying. He came to the Bramin and said to him the first half of a Dharma verse. He said: All phenomena are impermanent, which is the Dharma of birth and death.

The Bramin was very happy to hear this half Dharma verse and he asked the Rathar Ghost to say the next half. The Rathar Ghost said, "I can tell you the next half, but you need to give your blood for me to drink and your meat for me to eat for I am very hungry." The Bramin agreed to do that and answered, "I am happy to give you my blood and meat." Then the Rathar Ghost told him the second half of the Dharma verse and he said: After extinction of birth and death, one enters Nirvana.

After the Bramin heard the second half of the Dharma verse, he was very happy and satisfied. He wrote this verse everywhere. After he did that, he wanted to provide his flesh body to the Rathar Ghost as he promised. So, he climbed up a very tall tree and then jumped down, trying to end his life.

Seeing this, the Rathar Ghost was touched. So, when the Bramin was falling, he changed back to the king of heaven and caught and saved him.

In Avatamsaka Sutra, there is another story about how Buddha Shakyamuni pursued Dharma.

Many kalpas ago, there were many immortals diligently cultivating and practicing compassionate heart in the forest. One day, Immortal Zui Sheng had a thought, "Compassionate heart can sure benefit people, however, one can only help living beings eradicate annoyances and build correct cognition by delving into the Sutra Pitaka, listening to and contemplating on the Dharma principles and baring enough wisdom.

Immortal Zui Sheng wished to transform the mass with Proper Dharma, so he actively looked for a good teacher who was good at expounding Dharma between towns.

His determined mind surprised the heavenly Demon.

One day, from the sky came the voice of the heavenly Demon, "Immortal Zui Sheng, do you want to heart Dharma Verse spoken by the Buddha? If you are willing to peel off your skin as the paper, stab yourself and use your blood as the ink, cut your bone as the pen to write this verse, then I will expound Dharma for you."

Immortal Zui Sheng heard this and thought, "Since countless kalpas ago, this flesh body has been suffering in the cycle of birth and death and it has never benefited the living beings. Today, under this extraordinary condition, I shall give my life and abandon this weak body to obtain the wonderful Dharma.

So, Immortal Zui Sheng happily peeled off his skin, stab himself to get the blood, cut his bone as the pen, then he joined his palms together, looked up into the sky and requested the heavenly Demon to preach for him. Originally the heavenly Demon was just trying to create difficulties and obstruct Immortal Zui Sheng from pursuing Dharma. He did not expect him to really sacrifice his body. So, after Immortal Zui Sheng really did this, the heavenly demon was disappointed. And so, he left.

Seeing the heavenly demon leaving, immortal Zui Sheng kept on praying, "Today. I sincerely pursue the Dharma at the expense of my life. What I am doing is all for transforming the living beings. I sincerely pray that a merciful and compassionate Dharma teacher, when hearing my sincere heart, kindly show up."

When Immortal Zui Sheng was praying, in the east Universal Amala Buddhaland, King of Pure Name Buddha heard Immortal Zui Sheng's praying and he appeared in front of him right away. In a moment, his compassionate radiation shined on Immortal Zui Sheng and his body restored right away.

King of Pure Name Buddha expounded Gathering all Merits and Virtues Samadhi for immortal Zui Sheng. After Immortal Zui Sheng heard the Dharma, he became eloquent

and with this wisdom, he expounded wonderful Dharma for living beings and caused them to enter the Sacred road. After Immortal Zui Sheng expounded Dharma for one thousand years, he was reborn in the Universal Amala Buddhaland of the King of Pure Name Buddha.

Buddha Shakyamuni told Jing Wei Bodhisattva, “The Immortal Zui Sheng was me. From this story you know, if someone could sincerely pray for Dharma, Buddhas in the ten directions will not abandon him. Anywhere and anytime, this person would be able to see Buddha and hear the Proper Dharma.”

The Buddha said, “All living beings are equipped with the Buddha’s wisdom, merits and virtues. Due to false thoughts and attachment, they cannot attain.” The human body is difficult to obtain and we have obtained it. However, not many people cherish this. In this world full of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech and wine, there are few people who can hold the five precepts and the ten good precepts. Most people use this body just to live and enjoy. They live a life without thinking too much, a life of dream. Such a pity.

One day has passed and the life has been shortened. Like a fish in a pond with water lessening, what happiness is there? Everybody should cultivate diligently as to save the first incense. keep impermanence in mind and don’t indulge yourself.

Live every day with the Buddha; live every day with the Master; live every day with the Dharma and live every day with Wisdom. Repent, hold precepts, keep vegetarian diet, recite the name of the Buddha, read sutras, hold mantras, dedicate merits, practice the six paramitas, benefit self and others, awaken self and others, transform self and others, practice in the Bodhisattva’s way. Recite the name of the Buddha and keep the Buddha in the mind. Be responsive to the Buddha and get blessings from the Buddha. Buddha’s blessings are inconceivable.

Amitabha! Every day, recite the name of the Buddha for at least 30 mins. You may recite 30 mins one time or several times. The more the better. Be persevere in reciting the name of the Buddha, reading the sutras and holding the mantras. Perseverance will assure great achievement.

Na Mo Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the Shurangama Assembly. Every day, hold the Shurangama mantra for at least 9 times. You may hold 9 times all together or in different

times. The more the better. You may hold less, but you must hold every day. The merits and benefits of holding Shurangama mantra are inconceivable.

Reciting sutras makes clear the reasons; reciting sutras, one can contemplate on the wonderful truth. Every day, go through the compulsory course at least one time. You may go through the all the sutras in the book one time or several times. The more the better. You may recite less, but you must recite every day. It's better to recite one sutra at one time.

For beginners, you may pick one or two sutras that you like and then increase gradually. All sutras are good. There is no higher or lower one.

Meditation is not included in the daily compulsory course because it might not be safe for some of you. In meditation, different conditions might appear. Without a good master, one might be possessed by the Devil. Remind you: be cautious. Don't blindly meditate.

Repenting, holding precepts, keeping vegetarian diet, chanting the name of the Buddha, reciting sutras and holding mantras are still the safest, the fastest cultivation method. Do remember not to pursue the mysterious divergent. If something happens, it would be difficult to resolve.

The essence of time is our life. Wasting time is wasting life. Wasting others' time is wasting others' life. Enhance your perception of time and make your life more meaningful. Before you do one thing or speak one thing, think about it if this is meaningful.

A wise person should know that one will die one day. An awakened person should know that one will die one day. No matter you are young or old, you shouldn't avoid death. No one is too young or old before the Yama King. The impermanent ghost will come unexpectedly. When death comes, will you be ready?

Every morning, you should ask yourself, another day is given to me, what should I use it for? Everyone should learn to observe. Observing the impermanence is a very important cultivation method. How to awaken in the impermanence, while not live a muddled life. Live well every day and make every day meaningful, valuable, bright, with great love, with great compassion, with wisdom and with positive energy.

No matter what you go through, calm down, don't hurry or panic. Everything has its causes and conditions; everything has its causes and effects; everything will be O.K. Look at things with a wide view and treat everything with a wide mind. In this Dharma ending age, don't just recognize the clothes without knowing the person. The Buddha, the Dharma and

the Sanga are the three aspects of your own Buddha nature. Don't pursue outside. Take refuge in the Buddha of your self-nature; take refuge in the Dharma of your self-nature; take refuge in the Sanga of your self-nature.

The real temple is your physical body. Your face is the Maitreya Buddha; your eyes are Wei Tuo Bodhisattva; your ears are Guan Yin Bodhisattva; your arms and legs are the Four Heavenly Gods. Stand like the Bodhi tree; sit like the Relic tower. Cultivate the Buddha with the true heart and never pursue outside.

Real cultivators don't have blind faith in ghosts, gods, demons and monsters; Real cultivators don't worship ghosts, gods, demons and monsters; real cultivators don't indulge in supernatural powers. The Buddha is in the heart. If the mind is pure, the Buddha land is pure. Cut off the evil; cultivate the good and purify the mind, which is the fundamental of Buddha Dharma. If cultivating this way, everything would be O.K.

Don't have a blind faith that someone is some Buddha or Bodhisattva! Don't worship anyone! There is no creator in the universe and there is no savior. Your mind determines everything of you.

Don't falsely believe that someone is some Buddha or Bodhisattva. If you practice in the way of Bodhisattva, yourself in the present moment is a living Bodhisattva. Practicing in the way of Bodhisattva, yourself is the most important.

You are equipped with Buddha nature. The mountains, the rivers, the earth and all the living beings are equipped with the Buddha nature. All living beings are equal and all living beings will become a Buddha one day. So, do not need to worship and have a blind faith in any outside gods, even if he is a real god, not to say a fake one.

All Dharmas return to ONE, to Shakyamuni Buddha. All religions originate from the same source, from the Buddha nature. Clarify confusions and bring things back to order. Reform from the bottom.

Amitabha! That's all for today. In fact, every word, every sentence that the Buddha said, is wisdom. Every living being is equipped with the supreme Buddha's wisdom. Quiet down the mind, see clear the road under the feet, practice and perfect this life. Thank you! See you next week.