

How Long is One Kalpa?

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Aug 21st, 2021. It's also July 15th in the lunar calendar. It is the Hungry Ghost Festival in some oriental countries. On this day, we normally repent for our ancestors. We transfer merits to them. May they take refuge in the Buddha. May they listen to Dharma. May they leave from all the sufferings. May they be born in the western blissed world. It's a good time to connect to our ancestors and bring benefits to them. The Ring and Yang, the visible and the invisible worlds are never not separated. If the invisible world beings, if our ancestors are not happy, if they are suffering, then we will not be happy either. So what is our topic today? People often ask this question, "How long is one kalpa?" When the Buddha lived in the world, some disciples also asked the Buddha this question. The Buddha used two parables to answer them. Today, I would like to share these with you.

One time, the Buddha lived in Jetavana Viara. At that time, one disciple came to where the Buddha lived. He paid homage to the Buddha and then sit aside. After a while, he came forward to the Buddha and asked, "Does Kalpa has a length? Does it have limit?"

The Buddha told the disciple, "One kalpa is very long. Let me make an analogy. Listen attentively!"

The Buddha then explained, "It's like a big iron city with a length, width and height all about one yojana. One yojana is about 10000 meters. So it's a big cube. The city is filled with mustard seeds and there are no vacancies. Suppose that one person comes and takes away one mustard seed every 100 years, how long will it take to take all the seeds out? One kalpa is longer than this time.

"So you should know that birth and death is long-term, and there is no boundary. All beings are bound by love, cycling in birth and death. Die in one place and be born in another. There is no end of it. I am sick of life and death in it. So disciple, you should seek for skills to get liberated and avoid the thought of love.

After listening to what the Buddha said, the disciple was joyful.

Another time, when the Buddha lived in Jetavana Vihara, one disciple came and asked the Buddha the same question. The Buddha told the disciple, "One kalpa is very long and can't be counted. I will make an analogy. Listen carefully.

The Buddha said, "It's like a big stone mountain which is one yojana wide and one yojana high. Suppose one person comes with a piece of heavenly clothes in hand, and rubs the stone mountain once every one hundred years. (Heavenly clothes are very soft and light, softer and lighter than silk.) This way, after the stone mountain is rubbed away, one kalpa has not ended. So you should know, one kalpa is going as far and has no end, let alone one hundred kalpas. My disciple, birth and death is long-term and has no boundary. All the sentient beings are blinded by ignorance and transmigrate in the suffering sea without end. After death in one life, they will continue in the next life. There is no end. I have been sick of cycling of birth and death. So you should put down your desires by all means.

After listening to what the Buddha said, the disciple was joyful.

Amitabha! The above are the two parables the Buddha used to explain one kalpa. The Buddha never answered how many years is one Kalpa, and I don't think it is meaningful to transfer

kalpa to years myself. Time is illusion, not absolute and changing. One night of the lowest layer of the heaven maybe several hundred years in our world. In the eyes of the heavenly beings, humans maybe just the mayflie. But we shouldn't be mayflies. We are here for ascending. Do you agree? Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time. Bye!