

Elder Jing's Words

Those Liked by
Most People
for Your References

Noted down by Li, Ming-Xue
Compiled in the Year of 2021

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Printed for free distribution by
The Corporate Body of
the Buddha Educational Foundation

ISBN 978-626-98517-7-5



9 786269 851775

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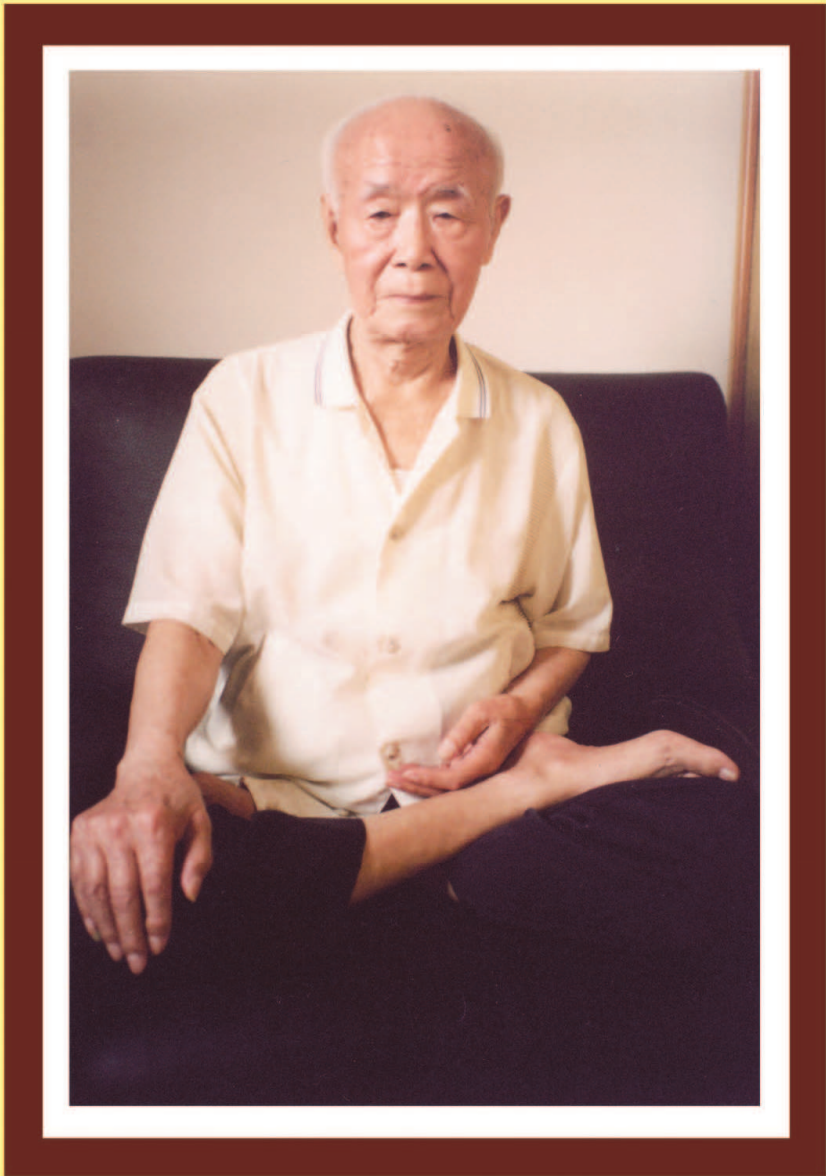
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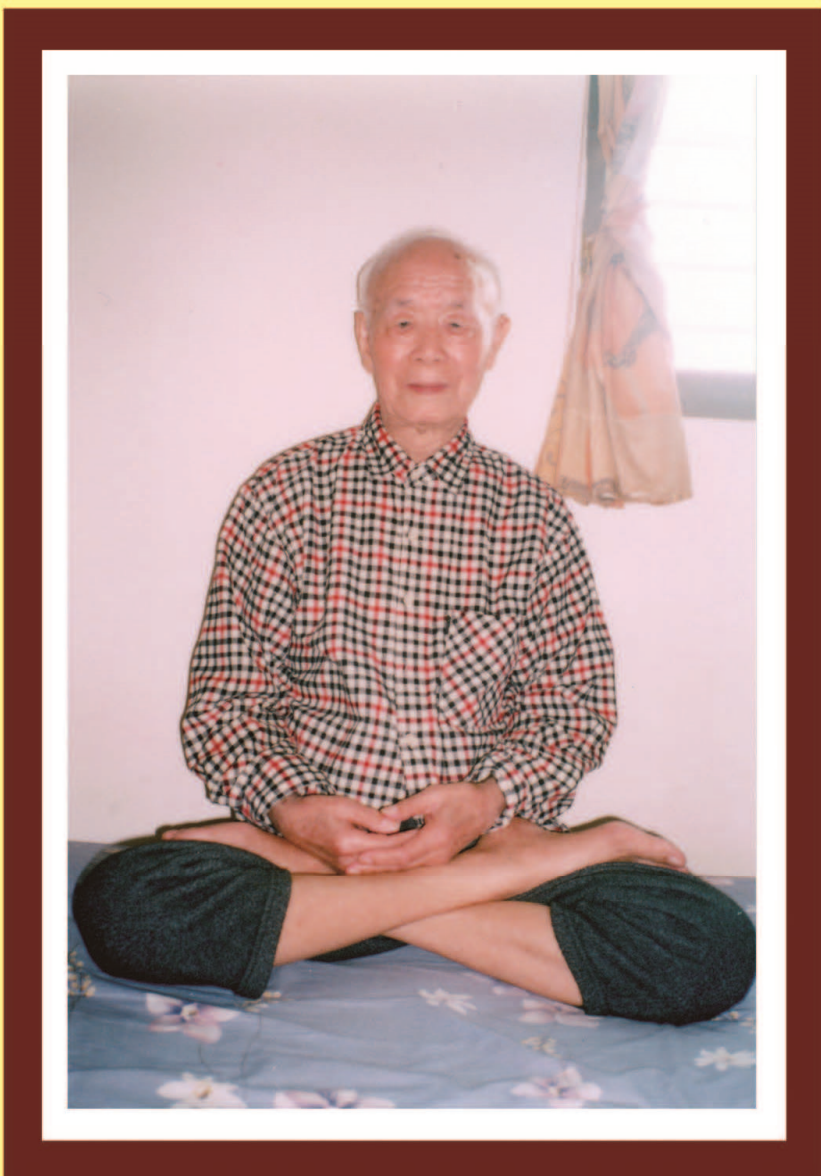
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Printed in Taiwan



Elder Jing at 93



Elder Jing at 97



Elder Jing at 98

古德云始學者未能破相
但能依相專至無不往生
不須疑也靜老之教亦如是

淨空敬題

二〇一六年
二月五日



The ancient masters said: “The beginning practitioners are unable to refute phenomenal appearances, but they can rely on the name of Amitabha Buddha with concentration and be definitely reborn in the Western Pure Land. There is no need to question it.” Elder Jing teaches the same thing.

Respectfully Written by Jing Kong

Feb. 5, 2019

Please be respectful to books on the Buddha's teachings. Do not litter them. Practice sincerely so that you will not waste time or create Karmas.

Elder Jing passed away at a quarter after five in the morning of July 12, 2010, at the age of 98. Upon returning to the Pure Land, he said: “The responsibility of this book is great. It is meant to be used to save sentient beings in the Age of the Declining Dharma. This book can save human beings. Practice accordingly, constantly keep the Buddha in your mind and recite Amitabha Buddha’s name, and you can naturally connect yourself with all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and the strength I confer on you in secret.”

Respectfully by Superficial Student

Li, Ming-Xue

Namo Amitabha

In the beginning, Elder Jing did not agree that I took pictures of him for memories. (Elder Jing often said to me: “Seeing forms is not as good as seeing the Dharma.”) After being requested again and again, Elder Jing finally gave permission. That’s the reason why I haven’t shown them to the public till now.

This time, it is because Ven. Jing Kong has granted verifications to this book and earnestly spread it, together with the agreement of Elder Jing’s family, that I decided to share these pictures with the public. I hope those who have the opportunity to read this book can put the teachings into practice: pursuing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land by having faith, vows, reciting the Buddha’s name and transforming habituated tendencies.

Namo Amitabha

My Beloved Teacher Elder Jing

Ven. Jing Kong

Superficial Student Li, Ming-Xue
with the sincerest prostration

All respectable learned friends,
Namo Amitabha:

Although the book *Elder Jing's Words* uses simple expressions to present the Buddha's teachings, there are still some people who cannot understand its meaning. Therefore, in order to help people gain better understanding, I tried to make some modifications to the book according to what was taught to me by Elder Jing, making it a more complete and simple account. Though the words and numbers have been rearranged in different versions, the meanings in them remain the same.

If the different versions of the book have caused your confusion, my humble self would like to ask for mercy and forgiveness from all my learned friends.

I hope that all my learned friends can attain

benefits from the Dharma Treasure and be re-born in the Western Pure Land through reciting the Buddha's name.

Namo Amitabha

Superficial Student Li, Ming-xue

Devoutly putting palms together with Namaste

Instruction from Ven. Jing Kong

I came here and found a book published in Taiwan called *Elder Jing's Words*. “Jing” in Chinese means “quietness.” He used the simplest words to introduce the Land of Ultimate Bliss to people. His language is concise, and the content is well-said. When sutras and Abhidharma are not well-said, people may not be able to understand them. Elder Jing's words can be understood, and they are in agreement with what is said in sutras. It is indeed a good book. I heard people who are supposed to be his disciples say that he hoped this book could be read by me one day. Now the conditions have matured; I have read the book and will verify its value. This book's teachings are correct; it is not casually said. By following what is taught in the book, we can certainly be reborn in the Pure

Land. I can make verification for you. How will I do it? Let me circulate this book. I'll print one hundred thousand copies for distribution. In this way, the Pure Land School can be joyfully introduced to people, which demonstrates the real meaning of "being grateful and rewarding kindness."

To spread the teaching of Reciting the Buddha's Name is in agreement with the Buddha's original vows. Disseminating the Dharma Treasure is one of the best things in the world, with no expectation of getting rewards being even better. While reading *Elder Jing's Words*, I found that practices mentioned in the book belong to Bodhisattvas, not the ordinary people. We should learn from Elder Jing, and we will become Bodhisattvas ourselves. If we read *Elder Jing's Words* often, it will greatly help us be

reborn in the Pure Land. This book can be compared with *The Longer Amitabha Sutra* and Elder Huang, Nian-xu's *Notes on The Longer Amitabha Sutra*. *Notes on The Longer Amitabha Sutra* is written in great details, but the aims and main ideas in both books are the same. Let us read *Elder Jing's Words* more; the teachings in the book are in accord with those taught by the Buddha and can save people whose conditions have matured.

*This instruction has been recorded in episode 611 and 623 of *Notes on The Longer Amitabha Sutra*, 2012; furthermore, another instruction — “Introduction to the book *Elder Jing's Words*” — was given by Ven. Jing Kong at the Welfare Association of Tsim Sha Tsui Neighborhood in Hong Kong on Feb. 19, 2014.*

Elder Jing's Words

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Noted down by Li, Ming-Xue

The 18th vow of Amitabha Buddha recorded in *The Longer Amitabha Sutra*: “If I attain Buddhahood, sentient beings in the ten directions of space who want to be reborn in my land, even only with ten thoughts of the vow, can absolutely realize this wish through ultimate faith and sincerity. If they cannot be reborn in my land, I vow not to achieve perfect enlightenment. The only exceptions are those who have committed the five heinous crimes and libeled the correct teaching.”

We appreciate Amitabha Buddha for establishing the unsurpassed name of excellent limitless-light and limitless-longevity to help all sentient beings be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

I vow to be reborn in the Western Pure Land,
With a nine-graded lotus flower as my parents.
When the lotus blooms, I will see Amitabha
 Buddha and awaken to non-birth;
As companions, I will have those Bodhisattvas
 who never retrogress.

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A Brief introduction to Elder Jing

In Elder Jing's full name, there is the word "Jing;" therefore, people call him Elder Jing.

Elder Jing came from Shandong Province. In his childhood, his family was rich, and he settled in Taiwan with his family because of the war. In the year he was born, his father passed away; at the age of 13, his mother died as well. He was brought up by his three uncles. Neither of his parents were Buddhist practitioners when they were living. His father fell into the Realm of Ghosts after death, and his mother became a Vietnamese. However, through Elder Jing, they are now both reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Elder Jing was born in 1913, though looking like a person in his 60s. He was retired

from a teaching job in a vocational high school. He walked fast and steadily, his voice was loud and he did not like fame and profit. Elder Jing never went to any monasteries or temples, and neither had he read any sutras. His mind is pure and without delusions; only Buddhas abide in it. He sticks to reciting the Buddha's name all the time, never changing to or adding any other teachings (going deep into one method).

When Elder Jing was a child, there were no Buddhist temples or Buddha-Dharma in his hometown. One day, during the break time in school (at the age of 6), while he was playing with a group of children in a room, out of nowhere, there came a monk in front of Elder Jing, smiling at him and holding him up to sit on a table. He taught Elder Jing to join his palms and cross his legs. After that, the monk went back to

the group of children, pulling two boys with his two hands to Elder Jing's sides, one child on one side (standing on the ground). Then, the monk said to Elder Jing: "Recite the name of Amitabha Buddha." The monk laughed out loud and disappeared all of a sudden. (Elder Jing was too young and fond of playing to notice where the monk had gone.) After Elder Jing went home, he asked the elders in his family "What does 'Recite the name of Amitabha Buddha' mean?" However, none of the elders understood what he said. He had no longer mentioned this matter since then, but he started reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha in private.

Some Events in Elder Jing's Life

1. When Elder Jing was a child, he played with his cousins and friends at a lake one day. Since he was not able to swim, he clung to the side of a small boat and played in the lake. After some time, his cousins told him to release his hand so as to have more fun. When Elder Jing did loosen his hand, he started sinking to the bottom of the lake. Elder Jing felt a hairy hand which was bigger than his back raising him upwards, and he was suddenly back to shallow waters by the shore.
2. After Elder Jing came to Taiwan, he had many opportunities to be promoted as a high-ranking official or a military general; however, Elder Jing rejected them all.
3. Since Elder Jing met the monk who taught

him to recite the name of Amitabha at the age of 6, he had been able to be mindful of the Buddha's name all the time, reaching the state of Meditative Absorption of One Characteristic.

4. So far, Elder Jing has been reborn to this world for many times. The purpose for his coming to this world this time is not to help people through giving lectures on Buddhism in public, but to protect sentient beings in private, lessening their suffering to the least amount, letting them lead a more secure and stable life and helping them recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice in order to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Preface

I first learned Buddhism in 1989. While reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, I also adopted other methods to practice, toddling on the path to the ultimate truth. Thanks to the blessing from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, I met Elder Jing in 1996. Elder Jing treated me like a family member and guided me to walk on the path to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice. However, as I was born slow-witted and with heavy karmas, my mind is still full of ideas of the ordinary people even now, despite the improvement gained over these years.

Thanks to the blessing from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, I was able to meet Elder Jing and was introduced to such wonderful teachings and methods. I started taking notes of Elder Jing's

words in the year 2002. After getting the agreement from Elder Jing, I published the notes, sharing the book with all people.

(All the content of this book was verified by Elder Jing himself and the title of the book was also given by Elder Jing himself.)

Even though we are not able to be disciples of the Buddha in person like people in the Period of True Dharma, however, as long as we follow the correct teachings and methods to elevate the quality of our mind, the result will be the same and we can thus call ourselves disciples of the Buddha.

Originally, I meant to talk more about Elder Jing to make you know more about him, but Elder Jing did not like fame and profit, always warning us to rely on the teaching instead of people. He used the simplest words to introduce

the original Buddhist teachings to those people who do not have time to read books or who cannot understand the meaning even if they read sutras. While the words are simple, the meanings are deep and correct. I hope those with opportunities to read this book can learn with a straightforward mind, **instead of reading it with an attitude to argue over it. I also hope that they can review the teaching in the book often and put them into practice.** In this way, they will **be able to practice in accord with the Buddha's teachings and methods,** reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha throughout their lifetime until being reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Noted by Superficial Student

Li, Ming-xue

Namo Amitabha

Forward

The Buddha's teachings are teachings of "the mind," so everything starts from "the mind." Everything is created by the mind. Whether being reborn in the Six Realms or the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss depends on "the quality of our mind." We ordinary people have stored countless seeds of heavy karmas in the Eighth Consciousness: greed, aversion, delusion, discriminations, self-obsession and desires. Without practicing Buddhism, we will forever stay in the Six Realms because we ordinary people are familiar with the Six Realms and are used to living there. Every time when we are reborn in this world, the opportunities for us to break away from the Six Realms arise; however, we again follow the force of our habituated tendencies (karmas) and remain in the familiar

mundane world either because we did not practice Buddhism or because we failed to achieve liberation before death. When another chance to be reborn in the Human Realm comes, it will be “at least” several hundred years later. If unfortunately we fall into the Three Evil Realms, life there is certainly very painful and miserable. Although being reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss to become a Buddha is unfamiliar to us ordinary people, if we follow the teachings in sutras and truly believe in reciting the Buddha’s name, we will be able to transcend the cycle of transmigration in the Six Realms and lead ourselves to the path towards the Western Pure Land in this life and become a Buddha there. As long as we recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with real faith, vows and practice, it is equal to reciting the name of all Buddhas plus holding to all Buddhist teachings

and Buddhist sutras.

Sentient beings in the Age of the Declining Dharma do not have the bliss to live with the Buddha in the same world. We do not have the Buddha around to constantly support and educate us, and it is difficult to meet genuine Buddhist teachers. Besides, we often take our superficial interpretations of words in sutras as the Buddha's teachings, not knowing what real practice means and how to really transform our habituated tendencies; in consequence, we cannot find the way to liberation. The Buddha knew the ability and disposition of all sentient beings in the Age of the Declining Dharma and our poor living conditions, so Shakyamuni Buddha and Amitabha Buddha joined their hands to save us, "customizing for our mind" the rare and extraordinary teaching of reciting

the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice; it is a method that helps us be re-born in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

Ordinary people are used to attaching themselves to conditions with their delusive mind; therefore, if they can focus on devoutly practicing the Pure Land Teaching, making their mind “attached” to Amitabha Buddha’s name, it can be the most suitable method in this mundane world. Despite the fact that lots of people are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha (walking on the path of the Pure Land Teaching), there are many who do not know how to practice in the correct way. The Pure Land Teaching is “beyond the eighty-four thousand teachings and includes the eighty-four thousand teachings,” which is the easiest and the most rare and extraordinary teaching because of the support

from Amitabha Buddha's vows. People from all walks of life can practice it anytime anywhere, and their work and daily routines will not be affected at all. No matter where we are, be determined to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. Do not forget the Buddha in our whole lifetime; have deep faith in reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha throughout our life. (The mind never leaves Buddha, and Buddha never leaves the mind.) In this way, both bliss and wisdom can be increased. Our life can thus be more stable and smoother; we can also get along better with our family and friends. Furthermore, at the end of this life, we will not fall into the Six Realms, such as the Realm of Animals; instead, we can be reborn in the Western Pure Land, forever enjoying a body without pain and misery just like all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

I. How to Escape Suffering and Attain Happiness

1. When we get angry once, our body will not be able to function normally for three days because irritation and resentment can produce toxins in our blood, thus harming our body. All diseases come from our mind; therefore, do not get angry or irritated so as to preserve vitality. (When sick, go to a doctor; put down your body and mind, and be absorbed in reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. When the mind is purified, there will be no disease in the body.)
2. Though the time we live in this world is limited, we still need to take good care of our body. Whatever we think, eat and act should be proper; do not exceed the limit of our body.

3. When we are sick or in misery, it is a reminder for us to really recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and change habituated tendencies. (They are causes and conditions to help eliminate karmas.) If we remove mental garbage (habituated tendencies and delusions), we will certainly become healthy and everything in life will turn smooth-going gradually.
4. There are two causes for being sick:
 - A. Not taking good care of oneself because of carelessness.
 - B. Karmas generated in this life or past lives.
5. The only way to remove all karmas (debts) forever is to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with true faith, vows and practice to truly convert habituated tendencies. All our enemies, intimates and creditors will gain

benefits because we walk on the “right path;” as a result, karmas, disasters and obstructions can really be eliminated.

6. The suffering for a physical illness is temporary; the pain for the illness of being in the cycle of transmigration in the Six Realms is permanent.
7. “Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to change habituated tendencies” will help us improve physical and mental health; it is also “a sovereign remedy” to leave the Six Realms. “Do remember to use it” wherever you go.
8. Deal with relationships in your family in accord with conditions. Do not establish new relationships when it is not necessary. For people who are real practitioners, they can

practice at any place. (The real Buddha Dharma should be put into practice in the daily routine of this mundane world.)

9. If our friends or family members haven't started learning Buddhism, it is because the conditions have not yet matured. Do not try to change them overnight. If our children have done something wrong, as their elders, we should instruct and correct them, but not in an emotional way, so that we can put an end to karmic obstructions. "Treating our family well from the bottom of our heart is the basic requirement as a human."
10. When conditions have matured, often mention "reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha" in front of your children. Plant the seeds, and when the seeds ripen, your children will certainly start reciting the name of the Bud-

dha. “Give suggestions, but do not try to change others.” We ourselves should stay calm and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. In this way, at the dying moment, we can die without worries.

11. Whatever you do, do it in accord with your ability: when seeing an old person falling on the ground while you are walking on the street, it is good to go help him or her up; however, when you see a person drowning but you cannot swim and do not know how to save that person, it is not a good idea to jump into the water to save him or her, which leads to the death of you both.

12. When having conflicts with family members in daily life and feeling worried, do not handle it with vicious thoughts, words and acts so as to avoid worsening the bad condi-

tions. When there is an opportunity, try to communicate; if not, calm down and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. This is the correct way to handle a conflict (the way to eliminate karmas). If we can regard those unpleasant people, objects or matters we meet as aiding conditions, they will become good causes and conditions to help us awaken and practice. Therefore, do not take things superficially.

13. Even though some of your family members may be your enemies or creditors in past lives, do not treat them as such. There is no perfection in this world; you can be happy only when you treasure what you have and feel content. That you can be a human in this life and encounter Buddhism is great bliss itself. You should feel grateful, and don't be

greedy. When your family is in harmony and everyone feels happy, you can handle daily affairs and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha much easier. (When dealing with family members or other people, do not find faults in them all the time; instead, often look at yourself to see if you have made mistakes.)

14. Upon seeing people or relatives do well, you should feel happy and bless them. Be broad-minded, and do not turn jealous. On the other hand, when you see people or relatives in trouble, help and bless them in a kind and positive way “in accord with conditions.” To help people and relatives “in accord with conditions” is the basic requirement as a human, and it can also help you accumulate merits.

15. When it comes to ordinary people, there are

conditions they need help and conditions they can offer help. Whichever conditions are encountered, give or receive help with kind and positive attitudes; however, “do not offer help without wisdom.”

16. When you deal with people, it is not real kindness to say nice words and show kindness while bearing evil thoughts and aversion in mind.

17. Eating vegetarian foods and not killing animals mean releasing living creatures; furthermore, it can restrain your desire for delicacies and cultivate your kindness.

18. You don't need to be alone, retire from work or have certain accomplishments to practice Buddhism. When nothing needs your particular attention and you feel relaxed, you

can recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and attach your mind to the name of Amitabha Buddha anytime and anywhere.

19.If you practice in a correct way, you will know how to settle things with great ease because of the blessing from the Buddha. The relationship between your mind and whatever conditions you meet will improve naturally, and your family will turn more harmonious and happier while everything in life becomes smoother. Even if things seem unsatisfactory, they will not grow worse.

20.When you earn profits properly, no matter how big they are, it doesn't mean you are greedy. (But, remember to leave some for other people.) It is good to be rich, but you need to draw up budgets, treasure what you have, spend money on right and good things

and not attach yourself to forms of the Six Sensory Objects; by doing so, it is a real blessed reward. Lead a life in accord with what you have. Feel grateful even when you are in poverty since poverty can save you from a lot of things (such as making plans, etc.) and you can have more opportunities to see the fickleness of human relationships. Spiritual freedom is a treasure that cannot be bought with money. Being rich and leisured is not real freedom, but cutting off bad habits is. (Gains enhance delusion while losses generate wisdom of purity.)

21. In order to lead a smooth life, it is indeed necessary to make plans in advance. However, riches cannot liberate a person from birth and death; do not take them seriously. Make proper budgets to live a modest life. A

person with a heart as small as an inch in size and desires as vast as the ocean is the poorest and the most pitiable miser.

22. For ordinary people, the most blissful thing is to be able to lead a comfortable life: disaster-free, healthy, respectable, long-living and having a harmonious family, a secure job and great fortunes. Even though one has all these blessings, they are impermanent and unable to solve the problems of birth and death and the problems of habituated tendencies.

23. The Five Desires and the Six Sensory Objects are like honey on a knife. Either because they are not Buddhist practitioners or because they reject the reminding and instructions from genuine good Buddhist teachers, ordinary people do not have the

wisdom and insight to know the danger of the Five Desires and the Six Sensory Objects; they repeatedly follow their own habituated tendencies, which are under the control of a contaminated mind, getting lost again and again in forms of the Six Sensory Objects and heading for the cycle of transmigration in the Six Realms.

24. The most miserable life means: being unable to control one's own body and mind while having feelings, and lacking wisdom to illuminate reality between true and false forms while constantly lost in the false ones.

Therefore, no matter what other people say, do focus on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to change habituated tendencies so as to be liberated from all "pains and sufferings."

25. The things ordinary people worry and fear the most are: losing everything they have, facing their dying moment and entering the unknown world after death. If these three things can be solved, they will become “selfless and capable of endurance.”

26. Owing to “greed and delusion,” ordinary people would think if they tightly hold on to what they already have, these things will forever be “theirs.” They do not know that the thinking itself is an illusion; it is not real. Ordinary people “are doomed to die.” If they want to no longer fear death and lose what they have, they should “create a world of bliss when alive, in which, after this life ends, they will never suffer physically and mentally, forever fulfill their dreams and live with liberation and great ease without any

concern for death.”

27. The Six Realms and the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss are both in your own mind. Once your mind believes in a certain teaching and method, you will walk on its path. It is the mind that decides which direction to go and which world to be reborn in. It depends completely on “what the mind has been doing;” everything is the result of what has been done by yourself all the way, and it has nothing to do with any other people. Which direction to choose can only be decided by yourself.

28. If you do not “make use of your human form to shift to another world,” you have wasted this life. If you fall into transmigration in the Six Realms again, it will take a very long time to attain “the human form” again, and it

is not certain that you will again meet Buddha Dharma then.

29. Sometimes, your lacking a sense of security with life may lead you to unknown pressures, exhaustion, anxiety, diffidence, etc., which make you unhappy. There are several reasons for this situation:

- A. You have not removed negative emotions like sorrow and hatred after you were intentionally or accidentally hurt by relatives or other people in your childhood or in the past.
- B. You are influenced by the habituated tendencies accumulated in past lives; therefore, you habitually feel dissatisfied when facing disagreeable people, things and objects.
- C. Your living conditions cannot satisfy your

habitual desires.

D. You feel resentful emotions like reluctant acceptance, humiliation, etc. because you are influenced by concepts of your own or other people, which gives birth to more complexes, making you “habitually unhappy.”

30. In the journey of our life, there are no so-called the strong or the weak; the argument depends on perspectives. Phenomena of the past have already arisen and ceased while those of the future have yet to come. Phenomena happening at the present are also dependent-arising. All dependent-arising phenomena lack Self-Nature; they are empty at the moment they arise and cease. Every past second has passed; we should let go of it and bring our mind back to reciting the name

of Amitabha Buddha. This is the real nice way to treat ourselves (respect ourselves).

31. In the mundane world, everything is dependent-arising and impermanent; hence, no one can lead a life completely in accord with his or her own wishes. At the dying moment, nothing but karmas and retributions can be taken with the person.

32. No matter you are married or not, you should lead an integrated life and truly recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to change your habituated tendencies. The Buddha will make the best arrangements for you (in the Buddha's way). Do not let anything abide in your mind so as to avoid handling things through your habituated tendencies (in your own way).

33. “The mundane reality” intrinsically includes good and evil as well as agreeable and disagreeable situations. Ordinary people with evil karmas mostly do nothing but “evil” things leading to the Six Realms; they do these things out of greed, aversion and delusion. Human life itself is exhausting already. If one doubles the suffering with mental complexes, constantly obsessed with them, it is even harder for him or her to awaken. If the mind of an ordinary person has not been educated with wisdom (the Buddha’s teachings), this person will abide in ideas of “I am,” “I can” and “I’m right,” and rationalize everything in life from this perspective. As a result, this person will weave stories of afflictions like suspicion, insecurity, sadness and feeling of being wronged. “If people believe in what the Buddha taught and follow

the way, they will have the wisdom to change the scenarios of their present and future lives.”

34. A person still breathing is a person still with the possibility to accumulate bliss; he or she should let go of past disagreeable things. Forgiving others does not mean excessive loving-kindness and compassion; instead, it is a mind that enables one to lead a liberated and unruffled life. One should know how to take good care of his or her mind so that he or she can know how to forgive other people.

35. When other people mistreat you, do not feel sad because ordinary people are controlled by habituated tendencies like “illusions, physical feelings, mental feelings, emotions, stubbornness, jealousy, arrogance, caring about reputation, fearing being taken ad-

vantage of, suspicion, being unwilling to be out of the spotlight, greed, aversion and delusion;” that is why various value systems were created.

36.If you do not abandon the understanding and attitudes of an ordinary person, no matter where you are, you will always experience the world through your habituated tendencies. This leads to people’s being isolated from one another mentally despite their physical intimacy and also leads to their fate of heading for the Six Realms. It is a lot easier to change yourself than to change others. If you can remain detached from the Six Sensory Objects and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha all the time, your mind will gradually stop fluctuating with the Six Sensory Objects. As a result, you will lead a

peaceful and pleasant life; furthermore, you will feel more certain about being reborn in the Western Pure Land.

37. Although time can help reduce resentment and sorrow and everything will come to an end one day, “if you do not let go of everything from the bottom of your heart and do not really recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice,” you still cannot turn evil karmas into good ones and end transmigration.

38. Ask only yourself if you are making progress or if you can be reborn in the Western Pure Land; you do not need to ask anyone else to get an answer. You yourself have to make the decision: what the meaning of life is, whether you want to believe in the Buddha, recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and follow Him

and where you want to be reborn; no one else or Buddhas and Bodhisattvas can make the decision for you. “However, once you miss some causes and conditions, there are not always opportunities for you to start all over again.”

39. Everything, every form and every moment is a process of birth and death; the connection of things, forms and moments is delusive. Do not take things too seriously. Too much obsession is not good. When encountering bad causes and conditions, stay away from them and be detached from thoughts of the mind as well. If you cannot stay away from the external conditions; at least, keep distant from your thoughts. (Do not feel resigned or indifferent; instead, you should follow the causes and conditions and do what you

should do while constantly focusing on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha and not laying hold of other forms.)

40. “The most dangerous enemies” are habituated tendencies in your own mind, and everybody should be responsible for his or her own karmas. All phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects in daily life are shared and separate karmas that are generated by illusive obsessions of all sentient beings. Therefore, take good care of your own causes and effects. You need to be aware that whatever you create through your body, words and thoughts is included in causes and effects.

41. If you do not recite the name of Amitabha Buddha faithfully and remove habituated tendencies, always blaming others for the afflictions caused by your own habituated

tendencies or hoping that the Buddha can pity and help you, you do not have the right view and thus bear the wrong attitude and tread on the wrong path.

42. Whatever happens in the mundane world is a combination of good and bad, which is like a messy Jigsaw puzzle. To have frustrating moments in life is unavoidable. However, “suffering” is not at all a dead end; instead, it is only a process and also a stimulus for mind cultivation.

43. Our original mind is pure and without contamination. By virtue of greedy thoughts, our mind generates discriminations and complicated illusive obsessions, thus giving birth to “a delusive mind.” No phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects can provoke anyone; it is our habituated tendencies that provoke the

Six Sensory Objects and we are exploited by our own habituated tendencies (the delusive mind).

44.If a person enjoys relying on phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects, it means he or she enjoys embracing afflictions brought by impermanence and desires. A person with genuine vows to be reborn in the Western Pure Land will enjoy relying on the name of Amitabha Buddha owing to his or her deep faith in it, like relying on the embrace of a kind father.

45.Buddha Dharma is meant to help sentient beings escape suffering and attain happiness. If teachings and practices cannot help you awaken from delusion, let go of everything, get rid of self-obsession and defilements, calmly recite the name of Amitabha Buddha

with deep faith, vows and practice and lead a life free from worries, “they are not teachings of the Buddha.”

46. We are currently humans of the mundane world, living a mundane life and doing mundane things; however, we should not commit crimes. We may follow causes and conditions to do good deeds, but we should not abide in the false forms of the mundane world, such as things or people that are good or bad, that we like or dislike, etc. We raise nothing but the name of the Buddha, reciting every word clearly and hearing every word clearly. Or, we can use the 3-3-4 method (the 10-time method). In this way, we can imprint the name of the Buddha in the depth of our mind and help our mind to be free from forms (let go of all defilements).

47. We are lucky to be born as a human. No matter how we look, no matter how high or low our social status is and whether we used to be good persons or bad ones, from now on we should sincerely lead a moral life in our everyday life and change our habituated tendencies of being obsessed with the Six Sensory Objects into the habituated tendencies of wanting to be reborn in the Western Pure Land through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice. As a result, “we become children of the Buddha.”

48. Ordinary people are learning from the Buddha’s mind and the Buddha’s practice, but it does not mean that they have the ability to apply the mind and practice of a Buddha. (Although all sentient beings are born with

Buddha Nature and have the opportunities to become a Buddha, how can they really become a Buddha if they do not walk on the path to Buddhahood?)

49. Ordinary people are curious all the time, wanting to know everything. When they are not careful enough, they tend to be obsessed with dharmas or walk onto an evil path. Try to consider this: “if a person cannot see what is happening next door or even his or her own habituated tendencies, how can he or she see Buddhas or reality of the universe?”

50. On the way to Buddhahood, it is hard to avoid encountering teachings which are different from our own. Whether we want to believe in them or not, it is up to ourselves. Following causes and conditions is the key point, and no one will force us to make

choices. It is a personal matter whether to believe in the Buddha and apply the Buddha's teachings or not. The Buddha never forces anyone to follow his way. All the teachings and methods are just introductions and references to help us make a choice. We ourselves should make the decision.

51. All expedient teachings and methods are good as long as they do not deviate from the right path (teachings and methods recorded in sutras); do not make comparisons since all will flow to "the Pure Land" (the elimination of karmas and defilements and the becoming of a Buddha).

52. A person with strong faculties does not need teachings; with only a few words, this person knows where to go. However, people with weak faculties like us need "genuine" good

teachers to help “instruct and discipline our mind” with teachings and methods recorded in sutras so as to help us walk on the path of putting down everything and purifying the mind.

53.No matter what kind of happiness we pursue, material or mental, they all come from temporary phenomena outside of our mind; therefore, our mind can never attain peace from them.

54.“The faith and vows” in reciting the Buddha’s name to be reborn in the Western Pure Land must come from inside of our mind. By virtue of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith and vows, we reduce our greed, aversion and delusion; consequently, we elevate the quality of our mind and enjoy “happiness.”

55. Have you ever calmed yourself down and thought carefully: Does “whatever you do” really help you settle down to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and change your habituated tendencies; or, you are just hanging around with words and the outer “illusive phenomena?” Are you purifying your mind, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha freely and heading for home; or, are you busy mingling with conditions and forms, lingering in this mundane world? Are you walking on the supramundane path, or are you heading toward the Three Evil Realms?

56. Buddha Dharma is not superstitious; the Buddha is an educator, teaching us to do the following things in our daily life:

A “Believe in causality and learn to be a good person:” Treat people with sincerity. Quit

doing or thinking about things that harm others while benefitting ourselves or things that harm both others and ourselves. Getting along well with people can help improve our handling daily affairs and reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. Both practicing Buddhism and dealing with people should be developed in a positive and correct direction. Live a modest material life: too much material will make us its slave and decrease our bliss.

- B. “Walk on the good path:” Practice hard and take good care of your family. In spite of the fact that you do not need to intentionally do good (virtuous) deeds, don’t be selfish and self-serving. If you encounter an opportunity to do a good deed, follow the causes and conditions to do it

to the best of your ability. Whatever good deeds you are doing, don't think of any worldly rewards you can get from them. Focus your mind on the wisdom of real emptiness. (While doing good deeds, do not bear in mind that "you" are doing good deeds. In this way, you will attain supramundane bliss.)

C. Walk on the path of "not being obsessed with forms and not abiding in forms" and "reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice to be reborn in the Western Pure Land."

57. Buddha Dharma is the Dharma of the mind. It all starts from "cultivating the mind." You don't need to do researches, memorize sutras to pass a test and compete with other people for the number of the Buddha's name you

have recited, the time you do sitting meditation, the time you sleep or eat and how much homework you do; you don't need to be obsessed with how decent you look, either. These are fake virtues (In fact, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice to be reborn in the Western Pure Land and reducing delusive and obsessed habituated tendencies mean real decency).

58. To be reborn in the Western Pure Land and be liberated from the transmigration of birth and death are the reasons why we recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and practice Buddhism; no other tricks are needed to achieve the goals. Practicing Buddhism does not mean cultivating super-natural powers (The "right" super-natural powers are not attained through acquisition. When all seeds

of the habituated tendencies like obsessions and illusions have been put down due to our practice, the inherent merits in our pure mind will manifest and start functioning; these are the “right” super-natural powers).

59. For ordinary people, it is easy to forget the afflictions in daily life and in the cycle of birth and death. Moreover, they tend to follow their habituated tendencies for small temporary pleasures before their eyes. Eventually, they are busy not only physically but also mentally. If they can have absolute faith in the power of the Buddha’s vows from now on and, wherever they are, constantly remember to come back to the name of Amitabha Buddha with perseverance, the quality of their mind will naturally be elevated.

60. As long as you believe there is the human world, you need to also believe the existence of all the Six Realms and the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. So, don't doubt the existence of the Six Realms and Buddhas just because you, as ordinary people, do not have the wisdom to see the reality of the universe.
61. Your life is supposed to be spent on putting the Buddha's teachings into practice; do not give it up easily.
62. If you commit suicide to punish others or run away from yourself, not only are you not able to punish other people but you will aggravate your sins. (If you kill yourself once, you will keep killing yourself for seven more times.) It's natural that there are ups and downs living in this mundane world. The problem you currently encounter is no more than a bot-

tleneck in life: “the worst situation is what is happening at the moment.” As long as you are alive with the Buddha in your mind (recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and keep your mind clean and pure) and feel content with life, you are sure to encounter good things in the future of your life.

63.If you commit suicide and die, you will be driven by your sin and suffer for a long period of time. The suffering will be many times greater than that you have experienced when alive. Furthermore, it will take a very long time to come to an end. (Suicide is a severe crime.) Do not think that death will solve all problems. Therefore, no matter how bad your current condition is, you need to believe in causality, bravely facing your problem and solving it. Don't be disturbed by

your problems; calm down and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, which is the path to liberation. When it is time to leave this world, you will be reborn in the Western Pure Land and be forever liberated from all afflictions.

64. The “nature” of the mundane world is always like this: there are different people with different concepts and different things and objects; there are joys and sorrows, birth, aging, illness and death, conflicts, etc. Committing suicide to end your suffering will worsen the suffering. So, why should you be so hard on yourself? (Though your physical body is not your real self, you need it to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and eliminate karmas.)

65. Your soul changes in accord with causes and conditions — a human being bears a human

soul, a dog a dog soul, etc. Only Buddha-nature never alters.

66. Even when two persons die at the same time or are buried together after death, they will not recognize each other when they meet in the next life because they are deluded by birth and death. Besides, people transmigrate in different Realms according to their karmas and retributions.

67. The dead are gone; do not stubbornly miss them. As long as the living sincerely recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, no matter where the dead person is, he or she will feel the blessings from the Buddha because of the living's sincere recitation of Amitabha Buddha's name, thus attaining the greatest benefit and leading a better life.

68. Everything in this mundane world is impermanent; it arises and ceases. Nothing is permanent. Do not keep any conditions or forms in your mind. Do not be obsessed, do not abide in anything and do not pursue anything. Just recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with genuine faith, vows and practice. Just let nature take its course without dwelling on your thoughts, and do not bring troubles on yourself.

69. In the mundane world, married and unmarried people have their own causes and conditions. Just follow your own causes and conditions in daily life, behave discreetly and do not make comparisons. Bear in mind that all forms and conditions are impermanent (Dependent-arising has no real substance). Do not be too serious with “whatever hap-

pens.” Follow causes and conditions, and work hard on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land so as not to waste the blessed reward as a human, which was not easily attained.

70. Unfavorable conditions in life are temporary sufferings. The real suffering is when your mind is led to the Six Realms by the Five Aggregates and your habituated tendencies like obsessions, illusions, discriminations, greed, aversion and delusion. As long as your mind does not follow the Six Sensory Objects and follow the name of Amitabha Buddha instead, you can be liberated from suffering.

71. When you are reborn in the Western Pure Land, “it is the mind that has been reborn, not the body.” Therefore, you should apply your

mind with absolute sincerity to practice the Buddha's teachings and the method of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith and vows. Only when your understanding and attitudes are right will your recitation of the Buddha's name be effective.

72. You came to this world with nothing, and with nothing will you leave this world. Do not haggle over every penny with people. Neither should you be selfish nor excessively compassionate. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. Get along well with others, yet keep your mind detached from causes and conditions of the mundane world (The mind does not follow the Six Sensory Objects).

73. Carrying out the Buddha's teachings means "disciplining the mind so as to be liberated from the mundane world." If you try to

change the world to suit your needs, you are seeking the Buddha Dharma outside your mind; “you will thus be entangled with more defilements.”

74. “The mundane world” is “a world of misery” with only little “impermanent happiness.” All forms arise and cease “in agreement with causes and conditions.” There are 10% of happiness and 90% of suffering in this world. What can’t be let go of? (It does not mean that you do not need to take care of your everyday life, but means that you should let go of all worries in your mind.)

75. Ordinary people need Buddhas to protect and take care of them so that they can attain the supramundane wisdom and all kinds of power to lead a happy and comfortable life; furthermore, when this life ends, they can be

reborn in the Western Pure Land.

76. The Buddha is clear about whatever is on our mind and whatever trouble we have. We do not need to ask for anything; we just rely completely on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. In this way, we are genuinely asking the Buddha for help and will receive incredible blessings from the Buddha.

77. Those who recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with deep faith, vows and practice truly take refuge in the Buddha and are real disciples of the Buddha.

78. Although ordinary people are unable to recite the Buddha's name around the clock, they absolutely should keep in mind the vows to be reborn in the Western Pure Land at any time (because life is short and im-

permanent).

79.If people who recite the name of Amitabha Buddha turn complacent, they tend to have “a fine start but a poor finish.” If they cannot persevere, they will “advance an inch but retreat ten” in the end.

80.Since we are humans of the mundane world, no matter we are married or not, we should follow the customs of ordinary people; at the same time, we should not have too many expectations and desires. Flowers bloom and fade; let everything follow causes and conditions. In this way, we can fully focus on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

81.All phenomena and concepts of the Six Sensory Objects are expedient forms (con-

ceptual elaborations) that reveal the principle of dependent-arising, and they cannot be relied upon for liberation from birth and death. After understanding the principle (we should let go of Dharma, let alone non-Dharma), we should determine to cultivate our mind, thus gaining the wisdom to undo the fetters that bind us.

82. When disasters are happening, do not panic or grumble against other people. You should stay calm, do self-reflections, repent and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha.

83. If you are guilty of corruption, doing things like taking other people's possessions through improper means in this life, you will have to repay the public by being transmigrated as cows or horses.

84. Merely put down everything and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice. Stay constantly with only this method; you do not need other methods, and evils can be cut off naturally.

85. Ordinary people make karmas in daily life while walking, standing, sitting or lying down when dealing with situations, and they also die in daily life while walking, standing, sitting or lying down when dealing with situations. If they do not change their path, they will make even heavier karmas, thus making it far more difficult to transcend transmigration in the Six Realms.

86. The Six Realms include the Celestial Realm, the Human Realm, the Asura Realm, the Animal Realm, the Ghost Realm and the Realm of Hell.

87. Ordinary people do not know that phenomena are comprised of various causes and conditions, which arise and cease, changing constantly and being impermanent false forms. Neither do these people know that being born as a human is a precious thing because compared to sentient beings in the Three Evil Realms, life in the human world is a lot better no matter how much they think they have suffered. In fact, what we suffer as a human can eradicate our karmas and can also motivate us to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

88. We cannot solve our own mental problems “through” other people’s mind. Only by relying on the Buddha’s teachings (Put down everything and recite the name of Amitabha

Buddha with solid faith, vows and practice) can our mental problems be completely solved.

89. The forms of the Six Sensory Objects are erratic arising and ceasing phenomena. Though they can be used expediently in life and in practice; they cannot be relied on. The only thing that can be counted on is the abiding of your mind in reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha.

90. There are no taboos for reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. You can do it wherever you are in your daily life.

91. Being busy for a lifetime, you may find that real happiness and freedom does not lie in money and social status; instead, it lies in

that you can get light retributions for heavy karmas and that you can be reborn in the Western Pure Land through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha in this very life, thus liberated from the suffering of birth and death in transmigration.

II. General Ideas about Understanding and Practice

1. All sentient beings have Buddha-nature. It is blocked by “illusions and obsessions” and cannot manifest itself.
2. Causality is not “established” by anyone, it is “created” by our own bodily action, speech and thought. Whatever thoughts arise, whatever things happen and whatever is done through our bodily actions, speeches and thoughts cannot be separated from causes, conditions, fruits and retributions. Whatever the causes are will naturally result in certain fruits. This is the law of the Nature.
3. There are four types of horses: A) those that run at the sight of a whip, B) those that run when hit lightly on the skin, C) those that run

when hit in the flesh, D) those that run when beaten to the bone. (Make a guess, which type are you?)

4. Some people, upon hearing the Buddha Dharma, feel very happy immediately; however, they go back to their own thinking two or three days later. Actually, they are not poor at reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. It is their own habituated tendencies that prevent them from the practice. It is also because their faith is impure that they cannot apply the Buddha's teachings; their root of wisdom is thus stopped from growing.
5.
 - A. Some people "dare not" hear the truth because they think they can avoid troubles by not hearing it.
 - B. Some people suffer when hearing the truth.

It is because they think they did not have miseries until hearing the truth. Actually, their “miseries” are concealed by their own habituated tendencies; the fact that they have not encountered and found their miserable conditions for the time being does not mean miseries don’t exist.

6. Upon hearing the truth, some people feel grateful and respectful while others give rise to defilements in mind. People’s feelings vary because everyone has different habituated tendencies. Habituated tendencies are like clouds, some thicker and others thinner. As long as we follow the Buddha’s teachings, change our concepts and attitudes and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith and vows, we will be able to penetrate the clouds and see the Sun gradually.

7. All forms are impermanent, and dependent-arising has no real substance. All forms are unreal. Nothing in all the phenomena (all the dharmas) is “me” and is permanent. Therefore, those who really want to be reborn in the Western Pure Land need to contemplate on impermanence to help them put down everything and truly believe in the existence of Amitabha Buddha and the Western Pure Land, with the deep faith that reciting the Buddha’s name is the path leading to the Western Pure Land. Therefore, when not paying attention to any tasks in life, you should constantly focus on reciting the Buddha’s name no matter walking, standing, sitting or lying down. Gradually, you will engrave the name of the Buddha deeply on your mind.

8. The Buddha is a saint with the unsurpassed correct enlightenment and complete knowledge of all realities. Whatever He says is words of truth from His clean and pure mind (supramundane enlightening words). Every word of the ordinary people comes from a deluded mind (deluded by forms and the Six Realms). Therefore, in terms of practice, we would rather believe in one true word from the Buddha and put it into practice than follow billions of false words from other sources.
9. “Genuine good Buddhist teachers” are people who walk on the right path and have successfully cultivated his mind; the title is not self-appointed.
10. Those who practice with sincerity will certainly meet genuine good Buddhist teachers to help them move forward smoothly.

11. When there is an opportunity to meet genuine good Buddhist teachers, we will miss the good chance if we are arrogant, opportunistic or insincere. If again in this life we miss Buddha Dharma and the instruction from genuine good Buddhist teachers, it means we do not cherish our bliss and are people suffering great losses.
12. To recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and modify our habituated tendencies is not as difficult as we think. The mistake lies in our misunderstanding the right knowledge and right views taught in sutras and by genuine good Buddhist teachers. We apply the wrong knowledge and view.
13. When encountering the Buddha's teachings spoken or written by genuine good Buddhist teachers, we should "receive them sincerely" so as to let the Correct Dharma imprint

deeply on our mind. Furthermore, we should not stop at the level of “contemplating and understanding;” instead, we should “put them into practice.” Otherwise, we are just “indulging ourselves in empty talk.”

14. Whether you can really understand the meaning of Buddha Dharma or not totally depends on “genuine faith.” If you are not truly faithful, even though you have the chance to learn Buddha Dharma every day and receive instructions from genuine good Buddhist teachers again and again, the quality of your mind will not be elevated; instead, it may turn even darker because you still employ the views and understanding of “I am, I can and I’m right,” which are the products of your deluded mind.

15. Success in practice lies in faith, gratitude and

respect. If your faith is not sincere, you “cannot be associated with the Correct Dharma” when you encounter it.

16. “The Buddha can only save those who believe in his teachings.” As long as a person relies on the Buddha’s teachings and has thus attained the right cognition, and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land with solid faith, vows and practice, this person will be associated with the power of the Buddha’s vows and is a person with predestined relationship with the Buddha.

17. It all depends on your “cognition and attitude” to decide whether or not you have predestined relationships with Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Do not blame on Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for your own afflictions.

18. It is not that Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are not merciful. They never leave sentient beings and have been making every effort to help all sentient beings get out of afflictions. Because ordinary people are obsessed with all forms and are too arrogant, it is difficult for them to adjust their cognition and attitude. If they are willing to “accept Buddha Dharma to adjust their cognition and attitude,” they can leave all sufferings of the Six Realms.

19. As long as you are really walking on the virtuous and right path, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will offer help; however, they help with “good” things only, not bad things. (Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are clear about whatever arises in the mind of an ordinary person.)

20. The reason one cannot be associated with Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is: whatever ordinary people think, act and want is selfish and self-serving. “Their good deeds are rationalized good deeds.” Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will help people leave the Six Realms and will not help people keep coming back to the Six Realms in order to protect them from deepening their obsessions with all forms of the Six Sensory Objects.

21. We can pray to the Buddha not only for helping us practice the Buddha's teachings but also for helping us with reasonable things in our daily life. However, we should not “speak one way and think another,” or take it for granted that the Buddha must help us. Or, we get angry whenever things do not turn out in the way we expected (not meeting the

standards of our habituated tendencies). If we have such arrogance in mind, we move even farther away from the Buddha. Even if the Buddha does give us blessings, we cannot receive them.

22. “Sometimes,” Buddhas and Bodhisattvas help us in order to encourage us. They want us ordinary people to lead a smooth life, become stronger and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with greater effort to remove the habituated tendencies which are leading us to the Six Realms.

23. Following are the situations when the Buddha offers help:

- A. The Buddha gives temporary help when we have difficulties in daily life.
- B. The Buddha leads us from This Shore to The Other Shore, which is permanent

salvation.

C. We receive both temporary and permanent help from the Buddha.

24. As long as you truly and persistently recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice to change your habituated tendencies, you are walking on the same path with the Buddha; Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will never desert you (Buddhas and Bodhisattvas “never abandon anyone”).

25. Although the Buddha always helps sentient beings with unsurpassed compassion, vows and equality, it is sentient beings who decide whether or not they will “keep the teachings and methods in their mind” and put them into practice. They might be able to cheat other people on whether they have genuine faith in the Buddha’s teachings and whether they are

really putting them into practice, they cannot cheat the Buddha and themselves, not to mention causality.

26.If you want to become a Buddha, you need to meet the qualifications as a human. Particularly, you need to perform your filial obligations and avoid doing things that might make your parents worried. These are the basic requirements for being a human.

27.Practicing the Buddha's teachings means real filial piety; it will benefit your parents the most.

28.When making offerings to the Buddha, you need to put the Buddha at the top of your priority, which means real respect. "Do not choose things that your family like or offer things in exchange for wishes that you desire

to fulfill.” Otherwise, you are not making offerings to the Buddha, but to your own greed, aversion and delusion.

29. The Buddha is a saint who has actualized the absolute emptiness and the unsurpassed Bodhi. We respect the Buddha not because the Buddha needs sentient beings' respect; instead, we are sincerely respectful because Buddha Dharma is the dharma “from goodness and purity.” (When we respect the Buddha, He does exist; when we don't, the statue of the Buddha is nothing but a lump of mud.)

30. When you live your daily life with a sense of morality, put down all illusions of the Six Sensory Objects and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land with genuine faith, vows and

practice, you are doing Buddhist affairs (things that can help you become a Buddha.); you are really glorifying the Buddha and making offerings to the Buddha as well.

31. Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is not at all troublesome. It is something that can “help you be reborn in the Western Pure Land to become a Buddha,” and also something that helps you enjoy the feeling of freedom and joy in your daily life. Whatever walk of life you are in, when you do not need to focus on a job or when you do not need to speak, you can recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. You can recite the Buddha’s name whether you are busy or not in your daily life, no matter you are walking, standing, sitting or lying down. Do not say you have no time to recite the Buddha’s name and practice the

Buddha's teachings. These are all excuses.

32. In terms of "time," there is no good or bad.

However, when you use time to do useless things like hating others, speaking ill of others, fighting for power and money, haggling over every penny, feeling jealous, worrying, etc., you are making the most worthless and wasteful investments.

33. Nightmares are illusory conditions of horror, aversion and all evil thoughts. "Real" practitioners seldom dream when sleeping. Dreams are illusions of a deluded mind. Do not take them seriously.

34. As long as you have very few desires and are easily content, do not seek permanent happiness in the impermanent illusions and constantly bear the name of Amitabha Bud-

dha in mind, you can live in the moment with concentration and wisdom. Also, your body and mind, together with all phenomena in the world, can be in harmony.

35. Ordinary people “fear retributions” because they are deluded; Bodhisattvas know all realities, so they “fear causes.” Ordinary people do not know the reality of things for lack of supramundane wisdom; otherwise, they would not dare to do whatever they want and let their bodily actions, speeches and thoughts go unchecked.

36. Some people might have the opportunity to meet Buddha Dharma, but they never try to thoroughly understand the meaning of sutras. Or, though hearing the words of genuine good Buddhist teachers (the Dharma), they cannot understand “the deep part” while

feeling ordinary about “the shallow part.” Or, they think if they are able to understand the meaning of the words and expressions in sutras, they are practicing the Buddha’s teachings. They do not know “while truth can be understood immediately, it takes a step-by-step approach to put it into practice.” Success can be attained only in this way.

37.Cognitive hindrances mean: what you consider the meaning of Buddha Dharma is actually teachings and methods that have been rationalized by your ordinary mind. They are vehicles that will take you to the Six Realms and cannot lead you onto the right path.

38.Buddha Dharma was not established by anyone; it is the everlasting reality and truth of the universe, which never arises or ceases. An ordinary mind cannot see the universe’s

reality because it lacks wisdom. In this case, if ordinary people are not willing to apply a straightforward mind (with pure faith and no doubt) to learn, it will be difficult for them to be associated with the true Dharma (difficult for them to understand and practice).

39. Buddha Dharma is the prescription medicines that can heal the habituated tendencies of sentient beings. They are expedient means which are not fixed. As long as the meaning is assured and the teaching put into practice, that is good enough. Do not keep thinking of the form of any Dharma so as to avoid obsession with it (there is no form for any true Dharma).

40. Buddha Dharma can be divided into two types: “Correct Practices” and “Additional Practices.” Put down obsessions, illusions

and discriminations, know your true nature, stay mentally pure and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land with faith, vows and practice. These are “Correct Practices.” Although we do not need to intentionally look for good deeds to perform, we should follow causes and conditions to offer help when we encounter good or right words, teachings, things, objects, etc. These are “Additional Practices.” (Not doing anything evil means good deeds; furthermore, good deeds should be done no matter they are big or small.)

41.

A. When we offer good and correct words, expressions, teachings, things and objects to people in accord with causes and conditions, we can elevate “goodness” to the

level of “purity” by doing it without abiding in forms and by reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. In this way, we are eliminating habituated tendencies and will be led to the state of “non-self” and the path of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas.

- B. If we are reluctant to share benefits with other people or attain fame and profit through good deeds to gratify our own desires, we are making “good deeds” into “evil deeds.” They will increase our arrogance and self-obsession. Then, no matter how often we recite the Buddha’s name, we cannot be associated with the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

42. There are several types of enlightenment:
Enlightenment “without Forms,” Enlight-

enment “with Forms” and Enlightenment “with Delusions.” After you have achieved Enlightenment without Forms, you will have the wisdom to illuminate realities and phenomena. Whatever situation you encounter, you will not leave the right mindfulness, which forever leads you back to the right path. When you have achieved Enlightenment with Forms, you are just on the way to the ultimate enlightenment. It is likely that you deviate to a wrong or evil path. When you have achieved Enlightenment with Delusions, you will be lost in evil cognitions, evil views and delusions, which lead to an evil path. (All forms are illusory. Do not take illusions as achievements of your practice.)

43.If you are able to see Self-Nature by reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, keep doing

the recitation and maintain this state of mind by “abandoning Consciousnesses while applying the Six Faculties.”

44. There is no “gain” in practicing the Buddha’s teachings. When you have attained Enlightenment without Forms, the “reality” innate in your pure mind will manifest itself and start functioning (it has no shape and no form; it speaks but does not utter a word; and it stays silent and yet speaks aloud).

45. Every Dharma Teaching has its teachings and methods. It is just like when you want to go to Beitou or Penghu, you need to go in the right direction and take the right vehicle. Likewise, if you want to both wisely lead a smooth and happy life in this life and be reborn in the Western Pure Land in the next, you should “dutifully fulfill obligations and harmonize

yourself with your family and the society while at the same time wishing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land and reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with true faith, vows and practice. Otherwise, you might work hard all your life, and yet be reborn in the Three Evil Realms. That is a disaster and a pity.

46.If you have been reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha for many years but your habituated tendencies like illusions and obsessions have not been mitigated and you are walking on a treadmill, lacking wisdom and not knowing how to walk toward the right path, it is because when you encountered Buddha Dharma, you did not understand its real meaning and only looked superficially at the language and words; therefore, you could not gain prajna (wisdom), which is supposed

to be the result of true practices.

47. When learning Buddha's teachings, you do not need to learn a lot. The key is to temporarily "put down whatever you have learned and known, stay calm to read and listen and do it repeatedly for many times." In this way, you will gain the prajna (wisdom) of "listening to and contemplating on Buddha Dharma." After that, you will gradually gain the prajna of "practicing in accord with reality;" you will then find the correct answer and the right path.

48. We should not blindly worship the Buddha or show gratitude by only saying it often. Instead, we need to "feel content and grateful from the bottom of our heart." Also, we need to "resign ourselves to fate," "embracing retributions and taking them with willing-

ness.” Furthermore, we need to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith and vows to end the relationships in this life and reward this world for its kindness. When it is time to leave this world, we absolutely want to be reborn in the Western Pure Land to repay the Buddha for His kindness. If we practice reciting the Buddha’s name in this way, we are walking on the right path.

49. Even when dealing with people, we need to be grateful and respectful. We definitely need still more sincere gratitude and respect when coming close to the Buddha. Because of Buddha Dharma, we have the opportunity to transform back into the mind and body of a Buddha from the mind and body of an ordinary person.

50. “A Buddhist practitioner should keep his or

her mental state as simple as possible.” When reciting the name of the Buddha, do not expect to attain anything, such as supernatural abilities, one-pointed concentration without scattering, fame and profit, a luminous mind to see one’s own nature, seeing the Buddha, enlightenment, safety and riches, etc. (When you are obsessed with forms, supernatural abilities thus gained will become your own karmas. Therefore, it is safer to modestly recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to change habituated tendencies.)

51. You cannot reach the Western Pure Land merely by “wishing” to go there. You need to faithfully recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with the wish to be reborn there to get there.

52. It takes order to get things done; likewise, it takes order to attain achievements from

practices. “As long as you have the right view,” you will not practice blindly, and your mental state will naturally go up level by level. Therefore, do not aim too high without considering your abilities.

53. It is up to ordinary people, not the Buddha, to decide whether or not they want to believe in the Buddha's teachings. If they decide not to, it means they are not willing to accept the Buddha's help, not wanting Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to save them. Therefore, the problem does not lie in “whether or not the Buddha wants to help;” instead, it lies in “whether or not you are willing to” come close to the Buddha. If you do not have true faith and vows and still have some doubt about the Buddha (it is you that have abandoned the Buddha), you will prevent the

Buddha from helping you and cannot receive blessings from the Buddha. If you cannot be associated with the right teaching, “the Buddha cannot offer His help.”

54.If ordinary people cannot be “mindful” of the Buddha, they will be “mindful” of people, events, objects, greed, aversion, delusion, etc. They will live in all forms of the Six Sensory Objects, which increases the habituated tendencies of their ordinary mind.

55.When the Six Faculties encounter the Six Sensory Objects or when you are emotionally unstable, you need to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha clearly and steadily. As a result, your mind will gradually calm down, and your habituated tendencies will also slowly turn weaker.

56. Whether or not your practice will succeed depends mainly on whether you believe in the Buddha's teachings, not on how many years you have learned Buddha Dharma or recited the Buddha's name or on how much schooling you have received. "The mundane world is an evil world stained with the Five Defilements. Transmigration in the Six Realms is painful. You should let go of everything from the bottom of your heart, truly believe in the Buddha's Vows and recite his name to be reborn in the Western Pure Land."
57. "The path of birth and death is a long journey of solitude," and so is Buddhist practice, which aims at ending one's own birth and death. It is like you eat and you get full; no one can eat and feel full for you.
58. If being in the transmigration in the Six

Realms is wonderful, how come you look miserable? If in this life you have the opportunity to be liberated from all sufferings, do grasp it tightly. Otherwise, you will keep being reborn in the Six Realms. The longer you stay in the Six Realms, the more you will accumulate your habituated tendencies and karmas and the less you will have the chance to be liberated from birth and death. Do not wait until you fall into the Three Evil Realms and then feel regretful. Once you miss the opportunity in this life, do you think you will have a better chance in your next life?

59. The Buddha never forgets anybody at any time, but sentient beings are always obsessed with things in the Six Sensory Objects. They forget to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha because “their vows to be liberated from

transmigration in the Six Realms and be reborn in the Western Pure Land are not true enough. That is why they ignore the recitation of the Buddha's name.”

60. Life is short, so do not be obsessed with little benefit at present or blame things on other people.” Instead, you should make use of the limited time to attain the benefit of being reborn in the Western Pure Land.

61. Although we are currently in the Age of the Declining Dharma, there are still Buddhas and Bodhisattvas protecting the sentient beings.

62. Not all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas make use of preaching sutras as their means to save sentient beings. Some Buddhas and Bodhisattvas help sentient beings in private. What

they have done cannot be seen by ordinary people, and actually what cannot be seen may have greater influence in the universe. In fact, the purpose of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is the same (helping sentient beings to leave sufferings and become Buddhas).

63. Those reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with “genuine” faith, vows and practice will naturally be blessed by all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas; as a result, evil things cannot approach and harm them, so they can really reach their goal safely.

64. Those people with high intelligence and great amounts of knowledge can invent products which make people live more convenient lives, such as television, cars and medicines. Among these intelligent people, some are with more goodwill. However,

although they can enrich their own life while improving the life of other people, they cannot change their own habituated tendencies, which will lead them to the Six Realms and prevent them from being liberated from birth and death. On the other hand, those intelligent people with less goodwill, because their views are mostly dishonest, are obstructed from the path of Buddhist practice. Their intelligence becomes their own hindrance and stops them from becoming better.

65. Smart people make use of worldly means to make themselves even smarter, thus attaining more fame and profit; however, their mind is tied. Wise people observe impermanence in the Six Sensory Objects of this mundane world and practice to reach reality through forms. Not only can they get joy out of

practicing Buddha Dharma, but they can also create bliss for many more people.

66. When you put down some illusions and obsessions, you will attain some wisdom. The Human Realm is the “Main Station” where sentient beings change Realms (or be liberated from the Six Realms). Therefore, do cherish and grasp this opportunity as a human in this life.

67. The “foundation” for practicing the Buddha’s teachings is believing in causality. The best path is the path of reciting in the moment the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

68. Though illusions are forms which constantly arise and cease, they also bear the nature of emptiness. If ordinary people in the Age of

the Declining Dharma want to “subdue” their illusory mind, they must rely on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice and on getting help from the Buddha. If they want to completely destroy their illusory mind, they also need to rely on reciting the name of the Buddha with faith, vows and practice to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

69. In our life journey, there are many things that are beyond our control; however, we can decide what stance we want to take and “which path we want to walk on.” No one else can make the decision for us.

70. If you want to lead a comfortable and easy life, you need to say goodbye to your past mind (the mind a second ago is a past mind; put down your obsession with it. In daily life,

as long as things that you encounter are proper, just do them with a straightforward mind in the moment).

71. In this life, you probably do not have great achievements in the mundane world; however, “as long as you can prevent yourself from doing evil things and develop towards goodness, have enough basic material support, discipline your habituated tendencies of arrogance and know to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice to be reborn in the Western Pure Land and liberated from transmigration in the Six Realms, you have attained the greatest and the best achievements in this life.”

72. In our life journey, we are taking tests at any moment. Furthermore, as our mind in this

mundane world has to face the Evil World Stained with the Five Defilements, it is doomed to be ordinary, busy and fretful. If we do not rely on the Buddha's vows (reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha) to be reborn in the Western Pure Land, we will remain in the Evil World Stained with the Five Defilements life after life and be reborn again and again in the Six Realms in an ignorant state.

73. When there is birth, there must be death. When the time our relationship with this world ends, we will leave it. Death is a process; it is like moving to another house. No matter how many times we have died and which realm we are born in, our Buddha nature neither arises nor ceases.

74. If, though having recited the name of Amit-

abha Buddha for many years, you still cannot recite the name of the Buddha with genuine faith and vows, this is because your faith is not true and you are still obsessed with people and things in this mundane world, thus tied by the mind that arises and ceases and by the false idea of “self.”

75. Not only do we need to live a normal life and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, but we should also bear the attitude of “being a visitor in other cities while mindful of our own hometown” (constantly missing our home in the Western Pure Land). In this way, we will gradually be liberated from our obsessions with the mundane world.

76. “Self-Obsession” is a common disease for ordinary people. We always mistakenly take our body, feelings, illusions, thoughts and

discriminations (the Five Aggregates of matter, sensation, recognition, volition and consciousness) as “self,” consider phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects “real” and regard our speeches and behaviors as forever right. Once something does not meet “our expectations,” we always blame it on other people.

77. We came to this world not to increase our obsession through illusions from consciousnesses and not to abandon ourselves to the habituated tendencies of our desires, both of which lead to the path of transmigration in ignorance. Instead, we want to depend on the Buddha's teachings to acquire the right view for awakening and be liberated from the bondage of ignorance (by letting go of “self” and letting go of everything) while we are

alive “as a human.” We want to live an ordinary, plain and homely life; with a simple lifestyle and peace of mind, we can happily recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

78. Although the Pure Land Teaching, together with many sutras in which the Mind Ground method is also taught, aims at liberating ordinary people from ignorance and reaching the Buddha’s state (unsurpassed enlightenment), not all ordinary people in the Age of the Declining Dharma can get to this level. Therefore, with unsurpassed compassion and vows “the Buddha has made use of reciting His name with faith, vows and practice and established nine qualification levels for sentient beings, so as to lead them to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss to con-

tinue their practice there.” This is because the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss is a perfect environment where all sentient beings can become Buddhas.

79. Although blessings from the Buddha have incredible power, we still need to accumulate blessed rewards by developing towards goodness and purity through our bodily actions, speeches and thoughts because there is causality resulting from them. “Aversion will burn up our own blessed rewards, and obsessions with people or things will make us caught in transmigration in the Six Realms.” Whatever our mind is attached to, we will get hurt for it. Things in the mundane world are impermanent. Therefore, no matter where we are, we should examine ourselves often: “If I die at this very moment, can I put down

everything and recite the name of Amitabha whole-heartedly to go with the Buddha?” “If not having enough time to say goodbye to our beloved ones, we should decide to let go of everything and recite intently the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.”

80. Buddhist practice means learning to put down whatever needs to be put down and arouse whatever needs to be aroused (reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land).

81. When encountering beginning learners of Buddhism, follow causes and conditions to encourage them to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, giving them a chance to plant the seed of reciting the Buddha's name in their mind.

82. The blessed rewards attained through giving Dharma teachings is much greater than those attained through giving material things.

83. All these statements — put down the impermanent forms, remove all habituated tendencies, do not abide in forms, put down all conditions and “cut, relinquish and detach,” though varying in wording, bear the same meaning of “do not abide in any illusory form of the Six Sensory Objects.”

84. All the Five Aggregates of obsessions, feelings, illusions, thoughts and discriminations in the mind are the contaminated “illusory mind.”

85. Honesty, straightforwardness, being down-to-earth, sincerity and absolute willingness mean the same as “reciting the name

of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice.”

86.The terms — Obsession, illusion, discrimination, greed, aversion, delusion, arrogance, doubt and enjoying dealing with forms — are equivalents to “habituated tendencies.”

87.The arising and ceasing mind, the thinking consciousness, the illusory mind, a false self, the Eighth Consciousness and the storehouse are all equivalents of “the mind of an ordinary person.”

88.Although the expressions — completely relying on, leading to , returning to, leading back to — are different in wording, they all mean “doing something whole-heartedly and single-mindedly.”

89.The Buddha is in your mind, not outside your

mind. Emptiness does not mean there is nothing; instead, when nothing is taken or rejected and everything is left as it is, that means emptiness.

90. The illusory mind and the true mind are two sides of the same coin. There is no “self” in the Five Aggregates; abandon Consciousnesses and apply the Six Faculties. The reality reveals itself when the mind does not abide in any form.

91. There are many different sentences, expressions and analogies in sutras which actually bear the same meaning. Although “true Buddha Dharma has no form,” all Dharmas with forms are “expedient means” which were set up by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to avoid misuse caused by misunderstanding because ordinary people have different dis-

positions and habituated tendencies. Whatever is said or written in languages or words, as long as it follows the teaching in sutras, can be called “the Correct Dharma;” they are all Dharma tools to lead ordinary people back to purity of mind.

III. Concepts on Reciting the Name of Amitabha Buddha: Understanding and Practice

1. The name of Amitabha is Amitabha Himself, and Amitabha Himself is the name of Amitabha; they are one, not separated. Amitabha means limitless light and limitless longevity; He is omnipresent. As long as we recite His name, He is with us immediately.
2. The teacher of all Buddhas in the worlds of the ten directions is Amitabha Buddha, who is the Buddha of limitless longevity and limitless light.
3. A Buddha has three bodies: “the Dharma Body,” with no shape and no form (the motionless body); “the Reward Body,” knowing everything (the body of wisdom); and “the Transformation Body,” the physical body

that can teach and save sentient beings according to conditions (such as the human body, the animal body, the body of a celestial being, the body of a ghost, etc., which is transformed to deal with sentient beings of different Realms).

4. World Honored One (Shakyamuni Buddha) was born to tell us the way to be liberated from birth and death and to help us be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. Ordinary people cannot see the Dharma Body of the Buddha, and nor can they hear the Buddha's words. Therefore, the Buddha was born as a human (the Transformation Body) to save them.
5. Although Shakyamuni Buddha was born a prince, He abandoned fame and profit as well as social status, sacrificing himself for the

whole world. It was not because He was heartless that He abandoned everything He had; instead, He did it for the purpose of saving sentient beings, helping them be liberated from birth and death and become Buddhas.

6. The followers of Shakyamuni Buddha, all his direct disciples (community of great Buddhist monks), were on the evil path before encountering the Buddha. After meeting the Buddha, all of them abandoned the evil path and converted to the Correct Dharma; in the end, they all succeeded in their practices. (On our way to Buddhahood, we should turn around immediately once finding we are not walking on the right path.)
7. All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas used to be ordinary people of the mundane world. All of

them made use of “the teaching and method of being reborn in the Western Pure Land” to remove all defilements (seeds of habituated tendencies) in their mind and become Buddhas.

8. “Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha” was established through the cooperation of Shakyamuni Buddha and Amitabha Buddha to liberate sentient beings in the Age of the Declining Dharma from the suffering of transmigration in the Six Realms. It is the most rare and extraordinary method.
9. Sentient beings in the Age of the Declining Dharma can be liberated from birth and death only through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha (the Pure Land Teaching). (It is just like the fashion of clothing; styles change with time.) When the Buddha was alive, it

was the Period of True Dharma and people were faithful and simple-minded then; therefore, the Lesser Vehicle was popular. In the Age of the Declining Dharma, the Buddha Dharma is deteriorating and the mind of the people is complicated and messy; therefore, the Pure Land Teaching (Mahayana Buddhism) is better for them. (You can think on your own if the environment and the people's minds are different in ancient times and nowadays.)

10. Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is not included in the eighty-four thousand Dharma methods, but it includes all the eighty-four thousand Dharma Teachings. It is the most rare and extraordinary, the safest, the most easily understood, the easiest and the fastest method; people with high, me-

dium or low intelligence can all employ this method.

11. As long as you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with genuine faith, vows and practice, you can solve all your problems because Amitabha Buddha has put all his unsurpassed compassion, unsurpassed vows and unsurpassed healing powers in his name.

12. "Namo Amitabha" is the Dharani of all the names of Buddhas and sutras. Reciting Namo Amitabha means reciting all Buddhas' names. All Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will "recite the name of Amitabha Buddha" for those who do the recitation with genuine faith, vows and practice. Except for the Pure Land Teaching, all the other methods need the followers to work hard on their own without blessings from the Buddha.

13. Those people reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with deep faith, vows and practice can be associated with the blessings of the Buddha; therefore, their mind will naturally transfer to the right path while habituated tendencies leading to the Six Realms naturally fall off without their making efforts. (Because of their concentration and wisdom, they understand the reality of the Six Sensory Objects and put them all down.)

14. According to *The Great Treasures Collection Sutra*, though billions of people in the Age of the Declining Dharma practice the Buddha's teachings, very few of them can attain achievements. Only by reciting the Name of Amitabha Buddha can they be liberated from birth and death.

15. Though named as "the Pure Land method,"

the method of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is actually “the Mind-Ground method.”

16. Eminent monks in the past didn't necessarily attain achievements through the Pure Land method, but they transferred to reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha for the purpose of being reborn in the Western Pure Land.

17. Reciting “Namo Amitabha” with a pure mind means the Buddha, which also means the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.

18. *Amitabha Sutra* is the only sutra said without requests from disciples. Its content is completely about reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice. “Being mindful of the Buddha” is the unsurpassed, extremely profound and subtle

method. Do not look down upon the name of the Buddha, and do not use other methods with it, thinking that it can increase the effect. This is a wrong cognition.

19. The Buddha is an unsurpassed and cure-all “great medical doctor” while the name of Amitabha Buddha is the unsurpassed and cure-all “great medicine.” “True” Buddhist teachers are unsurpassed effective helpers.

20. When you know about the correct teachings and methods, you just have the prescriptions. If you want to get well from diseases, you need to “take the medicine.” Also, you need to “keep taking it” until you are reborn in the Western Pure Land. When you reach that safe world, you will no longer have “diseases of transmigration in the Six Realms.”

21. Only Buddhas have the unsurpassed correct knowing and perfect enlightenment, and only Buddhas can understand all realities and the truth of the Universe. As ordinary people, we cannot know exactly what Buddhas have understood. The only thing we can do is follow His teachings and methods to practice so as to really be liberated from sufferings forever and attain the wisdom to do things with fairness and universal love.
22. Before you try to learn many methods at the same time or methods other than the Pure Land Teaching, know your ability and nature first in order to avoid going astray.
23. Practicing while studying sutras will take you a very long time and prolong your time of practice. If you are not yet enlightened, you may misunderstand the meaning of a

sutra and increase your arrogance, thus obstructing your practice. Therefore, it is better to constantly recite the name of Amitabha Buddha till the name stays in your mind. In this way, your safety is guaranteed and the achievements will be great.

24.If your faith in reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Pure Land is not solid enough and you want to read sutras to help yourself deepen it, as beginners, you can refer to *Amitabha Sutra* and *The Eighteenth Vow of Amitabha Buddha*. After a while when your foundation of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is stable, you can refer to *The Longer Amitabha Sutra* and *Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva's Preachment on Being Mindful of the Buddha*. When you have acquired some achievements in

reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, you can refer to the Prajna sutras, such as *The Heart Sutra*, *Diamond Sutra*, *The Altar Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, etc. When doing the daily morning and evening services, stay mainly with single-mindedly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. You don't need to particularly arrange time to read sutras; instead, read them in your free time. If you can thoroughly understand one sutra, you can completely understand all the rest of the sutras without reading them.

25. When you teach the Dharma in the wrong way, you hurt people's faculty of wisdom; therefore, do not teach the Dharma arbitrarily.

26. The teachings and methods in sutras are said by the Buddha; therefore, do "put them into

practice” for yourself instead of “reading them to the Buddha” or practicing them for other people to see.

27. When you have acquired achievements by reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, all sutras are in your mind. There were great practitioners in the past who were originally illiterate but later on could read books, teach Buddha Dharma and even do calligraphy writing to spread the Dharma after making achievements in reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha.

28. All languages and forms are arising and ceasing forms (false forms for expedient uses). Only the holy name of Amitabha Buddha can save sentient beings in the Age of the Declining Dharma from all forms of the Six Sensory Objects and help them be-

come Buddhas.

29. Before being reborn in the Western Pure Land, you cannot say that you have attained achievements with your practice. You need to keep reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with sincerity.

30. Followers of the Pure Land Teaching, please do not evaluate Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and other people through your habituated tendencies. Nor should you turn arrogant because your life gets better. “In the process of deepening your practice, beware of turning arrogant.”

31. Do not abandon your faith and give up the method when practicing for a few days or years without seeing the effect. At this time, you should calm down and honestly do

self-reflection to see if you have genuine faith and really follow the Buddha's teachings and methods. "Once you really follow the teachings and methods recorded in sutras, it is difficult not to lead a smooth life, gain benefits and be reborn in the Western Pure Land."

32. Some people may look hard-working, learned with sutras and faithful to the Buddha's teachings, but in their mind they treat people with the subjective attitudes of "I am," "I can" and "I'm right." These people are selfish and self-serving, so they will have more sufferings and defilements and will be caught in transmigration in the Six Realms by their habituated tendencies.

33. All methods are equal. As long as you can find the method that suits your ability and

nature as well as helps you be liberated from the cycle of birth and death and lead you to the Western Pure Land, that method is the most suitable and best method for you.

34. There is only one goal for practitioners who recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. That is to be reborn in the Western Pure Land when this life ends; there are no other goals. (You should abandon even Dharma, not to mention non-Dharma. The practicing process should be down-to-earth. The mind should cling to nothing but the name of Amitabha Buddha so as not to incur phantasms and deviate to the evil path because of obsession with forms.)

35. If you think you have practiced and achieved something and are enlightened, it means that you are obsessed with phenomena and forms.

A mind with clarity is a mind that can tell right from wrong, not a mind without thoughts. “Wisdom means taking great care of your mind and putting down illusions, obsessions and discriminations.”

36. You do not need to purposefully “create” a pure mind, a mind without obsession with forms or a mind with calmness, in order to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. Instead, when your “mind” is not occupied with anything that needs attention, stop your “mind” from following “forms” and keep only the Buddha in your “mind.” Your “mind” just comfortably follows the name of Amitabha Buddha. In this way, you are changing your habituated tendencies. (You are putting down all obsessions with your body and mind together with all things in this mundane world.)

37. When you have time, you can also do the Walking Around (be careful with your safety, walk naturally while hearing clearly the name of Amitabha Buddha). However, do not set gaining the advantage of both taking exercise and reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha at the same time as your priority; you should think that you walk in order to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. Do not put gaining advantages at the top of your purposes.

38. If your mind follows your habituated tendencies and the Six Sensory Objects, you will be like a lost child who cannot go back home. If your mind follows the Buddha (reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha), you can be reborn in the Western Pure Land and return to your homeland of purity.

39.If you are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with great effort but are not really willing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land (not willing to give up the mundane world even at the dying moment), even if you are reciting the Buddha's name around the clock, you can only attain the blessed rewards of reciting the Buddha's name instead of being reborn in the Western Pure Land.

40.Although you are learning the Buddha's teachings, doing good deeds and reciting the Buddha's name, you cannot be reborn in the Western Pure Land if you are not willing to put down everything at your dying moment (it means you are not really willing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land).

41.When ordinary people watch TV and there come commercials or programs they dislike,

they will change to other channels for programs they like. In fact, this is a good chance to cultivate and practice. At this moment, we should stay calm. When walking, standing, sitting, lying down and encountering things in daily life, do not distinguish between likes and dislikes, acceptable and unacceptable. Whether we change to another channel or not, do not associate with the Six Sensory Objects but stay with “the name of Amitabha Buddha” instead. However, we do not need to intentionally “shut down” our ears or eyes; we just lead a normal life. In this way, we are “really” living in accordance with causes and conditions. When we are watching TV and find that we are obsessed with phenomena, we should recite the Buddha’s name and hear the sound clearly. In this way, we can be entertained without leaving the name of

Amitabha Buddha.

42. When you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, do not hurry so that you can avoid impetuosity. Maintain the clarity of the recitation; recite clearly and hear clearly. Or, you can apply the Ten-Count Method (and recite for yourself to hear); if you cannot hear your own voice or know which count you are at, it means your mind has been distracted by the Six Sensory Objects. When you find the distraction, just relax and recite the Buddha's name clearly again. Do not blame yourself on that and thus deepen your delusion.

43. When you find an illusion arising, just notice it and do not think further. Relax and recite the Buddha's name clearly so as to prevent illusions from becoming as long as a soap opera.

44. Nowadays mass media are easy to reach, so the opportunities to encounter Buddha Dharma are many. However, because of their ability and nature, people in the Age of the Declining Dharma mostly do not pay much attention to the problem of birth and death and neither are they interested in it. Instead, they are more interested in talking about trivial things like foods, clothing and other necessities in daily routines, entertainment and longevity, which have nothing to do with Buddhist practice. They also enjoy learning from different sources, but in the end they still believe in their own cognitions rather than the kind and compassionate vows of Amitabha Buddha.

45. Worries are useless. You should plan for the future (future lives) when alive. You should

regard this life as your last life and do meaningful things in your last years. (There are troubles in the mundane world every day; if you prevent yourself from involvement, you will not be worried. You should recite the name of Amitabha Buddha at any moment and walk on the path back to the Western Pure Land.)

46. Do not wait until you have time to recite the Buddha's name; instead, when you do not need to pay special attention to something, it is time to recite the Buddha's name.

47. When you are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha and find illusory thoughts arising in your mind, do not feel bothered. You "discover" your illusory thoughts and habituated tendencies because you are being blessed by the Buddha for reciting His name to trans-

form your habituated tendencies. Therefore, do not feel upset. “Do not care about the illusory thoughts; keep reciting the name of Amitabha clearly and hear it clearly.” (It takes two to tango.) You can cultivate your practice by making use of the illusory thoughts. After a while, illusory thoughts and habituated tendencies will gradually diminish. (Those ordinary people who never have their mind come back to the name of Amitabha Buddha can never “discover” their own illusory thoughts and habituated tendencies.)

48. When you are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha and find that the Buddha's name and your illusory thoughts arise simultaneously, it is just like coming to “a crossroad;” do not go on the path of illusions (do not think further on the subject of your illusion). Instead,

keep going on the path of reciting the Buddha's name (with your mind following the name of the Buddha) and you are walking on the right path.

49. If we cannot recite the name of the Buddha well, it is not because we are stupid; it is because we are not yet familiar with the method. Do not feel annoyed or frustrated. Constantly return to reciting the Buddha's name clearly and hear it clearly. Or, we can use the Ten-Count Method. Gradually, the level of our practice will be elevated to "the mind always stays with the name of the Buddha despite illusions."

50. "That the mind never leaves the Buddha and the Buddha never leaves the mind" means "wherever you are, the mind forever recites the name of Amitabha Buddha" and never

follows illusions. “Only the name of Amitabha Buddha is real.”

51. We cannot put down those people or things that we treasure most because of our deep affection for them. We miss them even when we are working or having a meal. No matter we are walking, standing, sitting or lying down, we think of them. If we can apply such affection to miss Amitabha Buddha, we will never forget to recite His name.

52. The first thought when you wake up in the morning should be to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. In your daily life, whenever you do not need to focus your mind on anything, bring your mind back to reciting the Buddha's name. When you feel relaxed at bedtime, you should silently recite the name of Amitabha Buddha too. It does

not matter how many times you recite the name of the Buddha. “Those who recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with genuine faith and vows will not die without the Buddha’s name in the mind.” Therefore, do not recite the Buddha’s name with exertion; instead, calmly and peacefully recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and fall asleep naturally.

53. “Namo” means taking refuge and being respectful. When you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, you should recite it as “Namo Amitabha.” However, when you do recitation with the Assembly, in bed or at the dying moment, reciting merely “Amitabha” is also acceptable.

54. If you do recitation or do prostration to worship the Buddha, it is more natural to set

a time limit instead of counting the number [for example, you do recitation or prostration for 30 minutes instead of doing recitation or prostration for 500 times].

55. When you are doing sitting meditation and find yourself in heavy drowsiness, take a rest. Come back after having enough sleep. If the drowsiness is light, keep reciting the Buddha's name or do prostration for a while or move around a little and drink water, etc. While doing all these things, you do not need to concentrate on the activities of the body or the food you are eating, just constantly recite the name of Amitabha Buddha in the mind.
56. If your mind abides in forms of the Six Sensory Objects, such as supernatural abilities, phantasms, etc., they will become your karmic obstructions.

57.If you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with great effort or become more miserable after encountering Buddha Dharma, it is because “you do not understand the Buddha’s teachings and are bound by the forms of the teachings.” Or, it is because you are doubtful about the merits of the Buddha’s name and are not confident in the Buddha’s name and yourself. Therefore, you cannot recite his name with relaxation.

58.As ordinary people, all we need to do is recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. As for when to sit on the Lotus Platform or when to be reborn in the Western Pure Land, the Buddha will arrange all these things. We do not have to be worried.

59.Right views and right directions are more

important than efforts. You do not need to separate “reciting the Buddha’s name to transform habituated tendencies in order to be reborn in the Western Pure Land” from your daily life. Those people truly willing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land, no matter where they are, when they do not need to focus on doing anything in daily life, they constantly think of returning to the Western home and reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. If a person faithfully practices in this way, he or she is developing towards changing habituated tendencies and the mental state.

60. When you are doing sitting meditation, recite the name of Amitabha and do not empty your mind. Nor should you think at random or follow forms (phenomena). It is safer to

practice in this way.

61. Recite the name of Amitabha Buddha in silence to show your respect when you are taking a shower, sleeping, using the toilet or in unclean places.
62. If you have a headache only when reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, it means you have paid too much attention to your head (so the energy goes up and your mind cannot settle down). All you need to do is relax and recite the name of Amitabha clearly and hear it clearly. Your headache will definitely get better.
63. The sound of Amitabha's name outside of your own mind (such as from a chanting machine, people around you or the Six Sensory Objects contacted by your Six Faculties),

though clear, can serve only as a reminder for you to recite the Buddha's name on your own. Do not follow the sound outside of your mind. "The mind" should stay with the Buddha's name in your own mind. In this way, you are walking on the right path.

64. When reciting the Buddha's name, you do not need to hurry. Stay relaxed. Although all the physical feelings and illusory thoughts as well as "all the Six Sensory Objects in the mundane world" are there, do not follow them. Nor should you over-exert yourself, suppress yourself or shift your attention. Lead a life as an ordinary person: wear more clothes when the weather is cold, eat when feeling hungry, sleep when feeling sleepy and work as dutifully as you can. It is natural to forget to recite the Buddha's name some-

times; just come back to the recitation when you think of it and continue willingly.

65. In the process of practicing reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, you may feel uncomfortable because your state of mind is changing and seeds hidden in your Eighth Consciousness are forced to come out because of your hard work. You may have more illusory thoughts and feelings than before the practice. You feel lonelier, more miserable or more annoyed. (These phenomena will come and go for many times.) However, this is a necessary stage of the practicing process. It is a good opportunity for you to clean up garbage and transform habituated tendencies. It is a vital stage; never give up or feel annoyed. When encountering such a situation, stay calm and relaxed, keeping in mind that “all

forms are illusory,” so let it go. “Just recite the name of the Buddha word by word clearly and hear it clearly,” and the uncomfortable feelings will come to an end naturally.

66.If it is inconvenient for you to recite the Buddha’s name on a certain occasion or when you are with people who do not want to see you recite the Buddha’s name, you can recite in silence. You do not need to give up your determination to practice through recitation of the Buddha’s name. (When you recite silently, ordinary people will not know what you are doing mentally.)

67.Although our social status in this life differs from those in past lives, all the people and things we have encountered follow the causes and conditions accumulated in our

past lives and they are reminders and materials for us to continue our practice; we should not be obsessed with them. However, when faced with all these causes and conditions and phenomena outside the mind, we still have to be able to tell good from evil and right from wrong.

68. When you need to focus your mind to study, work, talk, calculate money and make plans, get things done well first. After you have done with those things, come back to the recitation. If you are doing household chores or things which do not need much attention, recite the Buddha's name in silence while doing your jobs.

69. When we are considering how to cultivate our practice or making plans on something, because we have not yet developed the abil-

ity to “illuminate with wisdom,” we need to rely on “thinking” as an expedient means. However, if we have finished the pondering and thought clearly, come back immediately to the recitation of the Buddha’s name, and this is not doing illusory thinking.

70. When doing recitation, you can recite in silence, with voice or with two lips moving a little (the Diamond Chanting). The method is not fixed because the merit is the same.

71. Whether you recite in silence or with voice, do not be impatient; relax and recite from your heart.

72. If the voice of your recitation is rhythmic, it means “you are obsessed with the method and the form of the practice.” Just bring back your mind, and recite clearly and hear it

clearly. Or, you may apply the Three-Three-Four Method (the Ten-Count Method): consecutively recite the name of Amitabha Buddha three times twice and then four times once, and repeat the procedure again and again. You need to be clear about where you are with the ten counts. In this way, you will improve your impetuosity and attain the state of calmness when reciting the name of the Buddha.

73. When finding illusory thoughts arising, know that they are just illusions of your Consciousnesses. Do not be bothered and stay with the name of Amitabha Buddha. In this way, you are going on well with your practice. (You are making modifications with the right mind.)

74. Recite the name of Amitabha Buddha clearly and hear it clearly while staying relaxed. Or,

you may adopt the Ten-Count Method. “This does not mean you are applying combined methods to practice or making effort to acquire masterly skills.” These are expedient means to help transform your mind from scatteredness to concentration on reciting the Buddha’s name.

75. You are not developing skills when you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with genuine faith, vows and practice. (Developing skills is an expedient expression.) True skills lie in “admitting” that you need the Buddha to save you from evil karmas, “believing” in that only the Buddha can ferry you over to the Other Shore, “being really willing to” recite the Buddha’s name to be reborn in the Pure Land and being as dutiful as you can so as to live an easy and pleasant

mundane life. Make yourself such an elegant follower of the Pure Land Teaching and wait for the Buddha to lead you to the Western Pure Land.

76. People in the Age of the Declining Dharma do not know their own ability and nature. Nor do they know that “all phenomena are dependent-arising and with empty nature,” that the merit of the Buddha’s name is boundless and that you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha not only for the dying moment but also for the present moment. These are why “they are constantly looking for methods but can never leave forms (phenomena). (They are not able to put down illusions, obsessions and discriminations.)

77. We should associate ourselves with the Buddha’s vows and blessings through gen-

uine faith and vows from the depth of our heart, not through self-confidence and perseverance.

78.The Pure Land Teaching is a method “difficult to believe in but easy to follow.” “Do not believe in it superficially” because the deeper faith and vows you have, the more you can let go. As a result, the chance to be reborn in the Western Pure Land turns greater.

79.Both letting go and reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Pure Land with faith, vows and practice are “life-long lessons.”

80.“The meaning of Buddha Dharma is to serve as a convenient bridge to lead us back to single-mindedly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Pure Land.” When

we understand it, we should let go of the bridge and “start practicing.” “At that time, we have arrived at the entrance of the Teaching.”

81. “The sea of the Buddha’s vows” is the forty-eight great vows of Amitabha Buddha.

82. The only way to be reborn in the Western Pure Land is through Amitabha Buddha’s vows, and “the Eighteenth Vow is our last hope.” Buddhas enter the mind of sentient beings through thoughts. “As long as our mind is not bound by anything but the Buddha, the Buddha’s name and the vow to be reborn in the Western Pure Land, we will naturally be associated with the Buddha’s Eighteenth Vow.”

IV. Why Is There the Cycle of Birth and Death

1. A human body is composed of the Four Elements (bones, blood, body temperature and breath). Although the appearance is different, each person has “the Six Faculties” (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind), “the Six Consciousnesses” (the Visual Consciousness, the Auditory Consciousness, the Olfactory Consciousness, the Gustatory Consciousness, the Bodily Consciousness and the Thinking Consciousness), the Seventh Consciousness (If a person walks on the right path and is enlightened, the Seventh Consciousness will be transformed into wisdom), the Eighth Consciousness (the storehouse of habituated tendencies), “the Five Aggregates” (material, feeling, thinking, transformation and con-

sciousness). The human body is comprised of the Four Elements and the Five Aggregates through dependent-arising (impermanence and false-self). Furthermore, what the body encounters every day is nothing but “the Five Desires” (wealth, sexual desire, fame, food and sleep) and “the Six Sensory Objects.” (sight, sound, odor, flavor, contact and illusory thoughts).

2. To make their physical body and mind comfortable, ordinary people usually pay attention to and are obsessed with money, social status, desires for food, desires for sleep, etc. They are lost in the illusions of the Six Sensory Objects, such as people and things they have seen, voices they have heard, odors they have smelled, flavors they have tasted, feelings they have had when touching things

and thoughts they have in their mind. They go all out for them and are obsessed with them. When “the Six Faculties face the Six Sensory Objects,” ordinary people are led by their habituated tendencies to become obsessed with love, hate, affection, enmity, food, clothing, housing, transportation, eating, drinking and entertainment. Moreover, they enjoy being respected and recognized. They want everything as their wishes; if not, they feel uncomfortable. They do not follow the Buddha’s teachings to walk on the path of liberation; instead, they prefer to follow their habituated tendencies that lead to transmigration. Even when they are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, they generate illusions. Their mind cannot stand being out of the limelight and enjoys mingling with phenomena, seeking Buddha Dharma out-

side their mind.

3. Prosperity and wealth are like floating clouds.

Life is short; even if you have attained some benefit, how long can you enjoy it? The world is impermanent, and life is weak and fragile. You should ponder why you are born to this world in this life time. Why so obsessed with all the impermanent phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects? Do not wait until you have lost the status as a human and then you understand that “nothing but karmas can be taken with you at the dying moment.” That will be a disaster!

4. The body is “the puppet” of the Five Aggregates and the “slave” of the Five Desires and the Six Sensory Objects. The illusory mind and the messy phenomena are forms of birth and death with empty nature. As long as you

do not follow them and stick to the name of Amitabha Buddha, your mind will stay safe.

5. If your mind fluctuates with the phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects, your mind will be entangled with them. If you can gather your mind and willingly recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, your mind will not float with the current. Your future depends all on how you understand things and whether you lead your life according to mundane or supramundane rules.
6. The past mind (memories), the present mind and the future mind are all illusory; do not regard them as real.
7. The mind of an ordinary person is a mind defiled by “forms” (seeds defiled by habituated tendencies). “Forms” can be divided

into two types:

- A. “Inner Forms”: greed, aversion, delusion, jealousy, memories, annoyances, miseries, pain, feelings, thoughts and ideas. They are illusions of the Five Aggregates.
- B. “Outer Forms”: sight, sound, odor, flavor, contact, languages, words, etc. They are forms of the people and things you encounter in life. There are seeds of habituated tendencies stored in the Eighth Consciousness (the storehouse) of ordinary people, so “if the seeds are not cleared up, they will sprout when spring winds blow.” For example, when you hear something disagreeable or see something or someone unpleasant, feelings of aversion arise (the seeds of the habituated tendencies of aversion) to associate with them. When this happens, the seeds of the

habituated tendencies of aversion gain strength instead of diminishing strength. So do other forms, ideas and feelings.

8. All forms such as defilements, habituated tendencies, etc. are illusions coming from self-obsession. “Self-obsession” is the major source of illusions. As long as “thoughts” arise, the mind will associate with forms and “direct” our body to perform bodily and verbal activities. For example, when we think of watching TV, we will do it. When we think of people or things we dislike, we feel annoyed. However, although we ordinary people “practice Buddhism with our Consciousness,” as long as “whatever we think” is the Buddha’s name, the Buddha and the Western Pure Land, we are not generating illusions.

9. You “think” about something before you do it. Whenever you have thoughts, you are lost in the illusions of the Six Sensory Objects and lead a life which “you believe is real.” Therefore, if you can lead all your thoughts to the name of the Buddha when you are free from things requiring full attention, gradually you will “not be exposed to ignorance” often and led by thoughts to generate karmas.
10. Ordinary people do not know all thoughts are illusory. If there were no teachings and blessings from the Buddha, no one could ever change his or her ways of cognition and mental states. As a result, self-obsession and illusions can never be put down.
11. Ordinary people mistakenly think that their mind is abiding in nothing; in fact, their mind is abiding in ignorance. On the other hand,

“the mind of those people reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with deep faith, vows and practice is truly abiding in nothing; their mind is illuminated by wisdom.

12. Ordinary people cannot transcend their own Eighteen Compositional Elements of Cognition (the Six Consciousnesses, the Six Faculties and the Six Sensory Objects) because they are obsessed with the Five Aggregates, regarding their physical bodies as “real selves” and thinking of those people and things in their lives and the impermanent phenomena their Six Faculties have encountered as real and permanent and furthermore, in their mind, they have the habit to “self-rationalize” whatever happens to them or in the world.

13. Although the Five Aggregates are there

functioning, do not follow them. Recite the name of Amitabha Buddha clearly and hear it clearly. And, keep doing it. Gradually you can be detached from the functions of the Five Aggregates and grow more and more familiar with the name of Amitabha Buddha. As a result, the wisdom of a pure mind will naturally manifest to function according to “the truth.”

14. Those people doing evil deeds are helping others to remove evil karmas. It is not worth their effort.

15. Whatever is done cannot be undone, and it is better to look to the future. Therefore, from now on, repent sincerely and treasure the blessed rewards in the moment. In this way, there is still a chance for you to get rid of your habituated tendencies. “Practice” must

start from the mind; if you understand that no one but yourself is to blame, you are saved.”

16. When you recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, recite steadily and clearly. Do not aim at “attaining one-pointed concentration without scattering” so as to avoid distraction by illusions and obsessions. Only in this way can you have the chance to reach the state of “one-pointed concentration without scattering.”

17. You don't recite the name of Amitabha Buddha for self-affirmation, taking spiritual refuge, competing with others for fame or social status or following the fashion. In the process of practice, do not over-exaggerate your achievements because of small enlightenments. With such an arrogant attitude, you may easily deviate from the right path.

18.The meaning of “making effort” is not that we make effort in doing recitation as much as possible to be reborn in the Western World, but that we should make effort only in keeping “reality” in our mind (the name of Amitabha Buddha and reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha), not in keeping the impermanent phenomena in our mind (mixed forms, mixed thoughts and phantasms).

19.Do not doubt your qualification to be reborn in the Western Pure Land or if the Buddha will save you, just because you think you have accumulated heavy evil karmas. These worries can only increase your mixed thoughts and prevent you from having confidence in yourself and in the Buddha. Wrong views may thus arise.

20.“Having sincere doubtless faith” means

“from the moment on being firmly determined to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and wishing from the bottom of your heart for rebirth in His Pure Land” as if your mind were “nailed to it.” Since your mind no longer fluctuates, you will not deviate to wrong views.

21. Practice means relying on the Buddha’s teachings and reciting the Buddha’s name with faith and vows to change habituated tendencies which lead to transmigration in the Six Realms. “It is a pity that some people turn arrogant because they have recited the name of the Buddha; in fact, they have discarded the Buddha and the Buddha’s teachings.” The arrogance arises because these people are distracted by the habituated tendencies of self-rationalization — I am, I

can and I'm right. With such an attitude to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, their arrogance naturally increases.

22. All the wonderful things in our daily life ("good life" in the mundane perspective) cannot compete with a life in which we can apply the wisdom attained from the Buddha's teachings, understand the reality of the mundane world and really put down everything and attain the blessed rewards to be reborn in the Western Pure Land through solidly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. The latter is the real "good life."

23. The purposes of practice are to attain wisdom, lead a happy and free life and be reborn in the Western Pure Land after our predetermined binding force with this life is exhausted. Whether we can achieve these goals

or not depends on “the quality of our mind.”

24. Since we are just visitors in this mundane world, we should put down everything and experience this life at ease. First of all, we need to learn from sutras, patriarchs and good Buddhist teachers so as to attain wisdom and then calm the mind down (discipline the mind, subduing it with the name of the Buddha). Gradually, we will awaken and put down everything. In the end, we will live a free life through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha.

25. All phenomena are created by the mind. Buddhas, the Western Pure Land and the Six Realms are all in our mind. All problems come from the ignorant mind which gives rise to greed, aversion and delusion. The compassion and excellence of the Buddha’s

teachings can be found in the fact that the teachings are mental medicines which can absolutely cure mental diseases of all sentient beings. Therefore, we need to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha while curing our mental diseases (gradually putting down our greed, aversion and delusion; putting down the crazy and illusory mind). In the end, we will rely more on the Buddha's compassionate Vows and be reborn in the Western Pure Land through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha.

26. Encountering Buddha Dharma is an opportunity to go upward spiritually. The key point is to have real faith and acceptance and put them into practice so as to be associated with the excellence of Buddha Dharma. We can be reborn in the Western Pure Land not because

we have accumulated lots of merits or we are skilled at reciting the Buddha's name, but because we have put down everything in this mundane world and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha. We do not need to do anything more but wait for the Buddha to save us through the power of his compassionate Vows.

27. Whatever teaching the Buddha gave is the right teaching; however, we should choose the method that really helps our mind stay pure.

28. To become a Buddha through practice, we have two paths to choose from. One is "Path of Holiness": we need to depend completely on our own effort for the practice, become awake first and then start practicing until we understand the mind and see Self-Nature and

all karmas are removed. At that time, we have completely purified our mind and become a Buddha. The other path is “the Pure Land Teaching”: we need to be as dutiful as we can when dealing with mundane affairs and gradually put down everything in the Six Sensory Objects. Furthermore, we need to stick only to the recitation of the Buddha’s name both in daily life and at the dying moment and have a strong wish (to go back to our Western home). When the dying moment comes, we will be led by the Buddha to the Western Pure Land and become a Buddha there.

V. Transforming Habituated Tendencies to Leave the Six Realms

1. In the daily life, what affects our body and mind as well as our quality of life most is our habituated tendencies. They are also the greatest obstructions to our practice. The reason we are not successful in our practice and keep heading for transmigration in the Six Realms lies in the fact that we are not willing to transform our habituated tendencies with Buddha Dharma (because we still treasure those habituated tendencies).
2. Habituated tendencies in the mind of ordinary people are habits accumulated life after life. Were there not the help of the Buddha's teachings and Vows, it would be difficult for us to transform them one after another. In fact, it is forever beyond our ability to purify

them all.

3. Those people who want to transform their disposition or other habituated tendencies usually do it through “retaining methods,” such as suppression or endurance. As a result, resentments and grudges are accumulated and their body and mind harmed while problems remain unsolved. If they can apply the method of “entering the stream,” it will naturally be much more harmonious. So, “endurance” is the method of retaining, while “not abiding in forms (phenomena) and honestly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha” is the method to “enter the stream.”
4. Those people under the influence of Consciousnesses and feelings “deal with” their life in mundane ways, so they lead a life that is blind, busy and aimless. On the other hand,

people of wisdom apply Buddha Dharma to “correct” their life; therefore, every day is an awakened good day.

5. Everyone has his or her ability and nature. Those of greater ability and sharper nature can be enlightened merely by hearing a sentence from sutras, and henceforth, their mind enters the state of no longer abiding in any phenomena.
6. If you can recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with genuine faith and vows while your mind does not abide in any phenomena, “the combination of the two methods” will make the recitation of the Buddha’s name even more powerful. The joint method can not only prevent new karmas from entering the Eighth Consciousness (the storehouse) but gradually remove the mixed thoughts and

habituated tendencies originally kept in the Eighth Consciousness (eliminating karma). As long as your mind gets purer and purer, your supramundane wisdom will manifest itself and start functioning.

7. “The mind not abiding in any phenomena” means your mind does not abide in any illusions in the Six Sensory Objects that you either like or dislike whether they are things or people your eyes have seen, sounds your ears have heard, the odor your nose has smelled, the flavor your tongue has tasted, the feeling you have felt through physical contacts, thoughts coming out from the mind, etc. Be as pure-minded as you can: simply walk when you are walking, eat when you are eating, watch TV when you are watching TV, sleep when you are sleeping, recite the

name of Amitabha Buddha when doing the recitation and work when you are at work. Whatever you do — entertaining clients, wearing clothes, having a meal, walking, standing, sitting or lying down, whether in stillness or in motion, carry out each and every duty under moral discipline, and meanwhile “keep your mind in complete clarity while sticking to nothing.”

8. “The mind not abiding in any phenomena” does not mean you become as numb as a piece of wood, forgetting everything and doing nothing. Nor do you become ungrateful and indifferent, evasive and negative or excessively compassionate, or you intentionally shut down your Six Faculties. Instead, it means doing whatever is right while not obsessed with sights, sounds, odors,

flavors, contacts and illusory thoughts with an awakened mind which focuses on the name of Amitabha Buddha only.

9. People of greater ability and sharper nature are able not to abide in anything while reciting the name of the Buddha; these people will be reborn in the Western Pure Land at higher status. We, as people of lower ability and dull nature, do not have to worry about the status; it is good enough that we can be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

10. You do not need to be constantly aware of what you do with your body, speech and mind to “transform your habituated tendencies;” in that way, you are using stone to suppress the growth of the grass. It is not an ultimate way, and you should start from transforming your mind instead. Learn to put

down everything and completely concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name clearly and hearing it clearly. With the blessings and power from Namó Amitabha, you will be able to put down your habituated tendencies of arrogance — I am, I can and I'm right. As a result, your bodily actions, speeches and thoughts will naturally improve.

11. Having too many desires creates negative emotions, and this is asking for trouble. Those people who are content, mindful of the Buddha, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha and wishing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land can alleviate their negative emotions. Furthermore, their body and mind naturally turn majestic.

12. People who really know how to love themselves will not forget the Buddha. Also, they

will recite the name of the Buddha honestly and handle people and the world with their pure mind and good deeds. We should know that no matter how large amounts of merits we have accumulated, we will still suffer because of the mistakes caused by vitriol, resentment and narrow-mindedness (when our mind gives rise to evil thoughts, we ourselves will suffer from the miserable results).

13. In your daily life, deal with phenomena with an attitude of “acceptance;” stay calm so that you will not handle situations with self-obsession and negative emotions, which may lead to decisions you will regret.

14. Real winners are those who can discipline their mind and be reborn in the Western Pure Land in this life.

15. We recite the name of Amitabha Buddha for the purpose of being liberated from birth and death and reborn in the Western Pure Land, don't we? So, why be obsessed with things that lead to the endless cycle of birth and death in the Six Realms?
16. Although the phenomena in the Six Sensory Objects are all-inclusive, they cannot be differentiated into bitter and pleasant, or right and wrong. It is we ourselves that are mistakenly restrained by our own illusory mind, regarding false phenomena as reality. No wonder we are still wandering around and cannot find our way home.
17. All worries are images projected from the habituated tendencies of our illusory mind. If we are obsessed with them, we are restrained. Every thought has its cause and effect. When

we find meaningless thoughts, emotions, greed, aversion, etc. arising in the mind, “do not care about how they fluctuate” and the illusions will naturally disappear.

18. It is common that ordinary people make mistakes. Therefore, give yourself and other people opportunities to turn over a new leaf.

19. If we cannot change other people, we can change ourselves. The best way to change ourselves is giving other people suggestions to do right things while “not trying to change them.”

20. Bear good wishes in the mind and just try your best when dealing with essential mundane affairs. In this way, you can reserve room for yourself and diminish frictions with other people.

21. The meaning of “Look out for yourself, or heaven and earth will combine to destroy you” does not refer to the idea that being selfish is correct; here “yourself” indicates the clean and pure original mind (Buddha nature). If you do not take good care of your Buddha nature and indulge yourself in selfish, greedy, averse and deluded states, since there are natural laws in the world (causality), you will incur evil retributions if you project negative messages through your bodily actions, speeches and thoughts. In the end, you will take the consequence of your own deeds. “Whatever good or evil thought is projected from your mind, it will last forever as long as its seed is not removed, and you will have to take the consequence yourself.”

22. The ability and nature of us ordinary people

are low and bad and thus cannot awaken to “the true mind” (the original mind, or Buddha Nature) in this life, but we can rely on the Buddha’s Vows to cultivate what is true through the false (In the false phenomena of birth and death in our daily life, we should regard the Buddha’s name as the only truth and our mind should never depart from the name.) and go back to our Western home to see our loving Father by taking the vehicle of His Vows and attain the true mind again.

23. The mind of an ordinary person is crowded with illusory thoughts, fluctuating and unstable; therefore, no matter how hard we work and how smart we are, we are doomed to stay in transmigration in the Six Realms. If we want to be liberated from the misery of transmigration, reciting the name of Amit-

abha Buddha is the only way (because the Buddha has put his unsurpassed merits and the benefit of being reborn in the Western Pure Land in His Vows and His name).

24. Where will we go after death? It is “completely created by the mind.” As long as our faith in being reborn in the Western Pure Land through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice is firm enough, at the dying moment even if conditions are not good enough for our rebirth in the Western Pure Land, the Buddha will make it up for us.

25. We do not need to score high to be reborn in the Western Pure Land (the lowest class is enough), but we do need to have the wish to be reborn in the Western Pure Land at the dying moment.

VI No Recitation of Amitabha Buddha's Name, No Rebirth in the Western Pure Land

1. The life journey of ordinary people, whether they are poor or rich, looking good or bad, with high or low social status, will end someday. At the dying moment, your breathing becomes difficult, the Four Great Elements start breaking, the physical body is going to be as painful as having cramps and bone fractures, you cannot put down things in the mundane world, your debtors and enemies in previous lives come to avenge and obstruct you, your body and mind is going to bear “extremely painful” feelings and your mind is very clear but you cannot move physically, utter any words and use any facial expression to express yourself despite your eagerness to talk. This condition lasts

for at least eight or nine hours before your Consciousnesses leave your physical body. Have you ever thought about what might happen at that moment without the blessings from the Buddha? Where will you be reborn?

2. When the dying moment comes but there are still wishes not yet fulfilled, the Buddha will certainly help you realize your wishes if you are one of those who faithfully vow to be reborn in the Western World through reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice. You can be reborn in the Western Pure Land at later time when causes and conditions are ripe.
3. It is easier for people in the Age of the Declining Dharma to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss than to be reborn in the Human Realm or the Celestial Realm because

in addition to the Buddha's teachings to change their ways of cognition and mental states, they also have the Buddha's vows to help them.

4. Although Buddhist practices are difficult, it is a lot easier than living in the Six Realms, in which there are not many things meeting your expectations. And, the suffering of being cut by a thousand swords in the Evil Realms is even worse. Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha can transform your habituated tendencies and remove your karmic obstructions without your spending money or sparing time for it. It will neither cause you to suffer nor cause you to lose anything; instead, it is the most pleasant thing in life. Therefore, rely completely on the name of the Buddha so as to avoid afflictions of

transmigration.

5. Do not under-estimate the blessed rewards as a human because only in the Human Realm is there the best chance to “shift tracks” by letting you do things that help you go to a better place in your next life as well as benefit other people. “Being reborn in the Western Pure Land is like immigrating to another country, so don’t be obsessed with anything in this country anymore.”
6. Being alive is in the moment, and so is the dying process. When you are not able to breathe, you cannot but put down people, things, status, etc. in this mundane world. However, people in the Age of the Declining Dharma have heavy habituated tendencies and more often than not are likely to fall into the Three Evil Realms following their karmic

power. “Therefore, reciting the name of the Buddha when alive has everything to do with being reborn in the Western Pure Land.”

7. If you think you are lacking in energy to practice and there is such a long way to go before being liberated, you need to tell yourself that you are just an ordinary person with evil karmas, not a Buddha or Bodhi-sattva. You also need to stop struggling over meaningless things (you cannot even control your mind well; how can you argue with others well?). In fact, it is better to live a modest life from now on and constantly recite the Buddha's name so as to lead a colorful and meaningful life of your own.
8. The Buddha will only help us walk on a good path and will never harm us. As long as we are really willing to repent and put the

teachings expounded by the Buddha into practice, we will have the opportunity to be elevated to the level of “the mind is the site of enlightenment; phenomena of the Six Sensory Objects are tools for us to practice.” No matter where we are, we can feel free and happy because our mind is always in clarity.

9. Whether you can attain wisdom and lead a free and happy life, whether you can be re-born in the Western Land when departing from this world, it all depends on “your understanding of the mind and your attitudes,” not on Buddha Dharma, Buddhas or Bodhisattvas.
10. Since it is difficult for us ordinary people to cut off our greed, aversion and delusion, we need to rely completely on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to help us reduce

mundane desires and be reborn in the Western Pure Land, in which all desires and the cycle of birth and death leading to suffering can be permanently cut off.

11. In transmigrating in the Six Realms, we are just like children who are separated from their family, have lost their way home and been wandering around miserably. We are lucky to have encountered the Pure Land Teaching in this life; this means we have met our parents of purity (parents of our Dharma Body), who will never dislike or abandon us and will enable us to go back to the happiest and the most secure “home” in which afflictions have forever been removed. Therefore, we should recite the name of Amitabha Buddha with the kind of affection for a dearest family member (just recite the name

of Amitabha Buddha clearly and hear it clearly; there is no need for words, contemplation on images or contemplation on the mind to assist the recitation).

12. The method of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha clearly and hearing it clearly includes contemplation in it. You will gradually develop enough concentration and wisdom to find illusory thoughts, greed, aversion and delusion when they arise. Therefore, you do not need to “intentionally” apply the additional method of contemplating on the mind.

13. People reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha lead the same ordinary life as those who do not recite the name of the Buddha. The Six Faculties of both kinds of people contact the Six Sensory Objects twenty-four hours a day in daily life. However, those people not reciting

the Buddha's name are obsessed with fame and profit. They hold on to things that are beneficial to them; the more, the better. They know life is impermanent but they refuse to accept this fact, always obsessed with defilements like "what I like and what I dislike" or "the rituals for practice, terminology and rules," etc.

14. Those people reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with genuine faith care about all sentient beings but are not excessively compassionate (care without obsession). Also, they practice in daily life (although they do not recite the name of the Buddha around the clock, they can put down everything and are ready to be reborn in the Western Pure Land). Therefore, we know the cognition and mental state of people reciting the name of the Buddha are

completely different from those who do not recite the Buddha's name.

15. Phenomena in the mundane world are all-inclusive. "If you can bear things originally unbearable, you can lessen the fluctuation of your mind." Things in the mundane world are dreams; they are as transient as fleeting clouds. Make good use of this understanding and take good care of the Buddha's name in the moment. "If you can practice in this way, you are doing Buddha-work in dreams."

16. If you have the opportunity to do good deeds, even though nobody has noticed it and given you praise, continue doing it because the law of causality knows it. Also, when you are misunderstood or insulted by other people, do not argue because the law of causality knows it too. Regard these as the ladder of cultivating

the mind.

17. Though a lot of people recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, the results are different because their understanding and mental states are different.

VII. How to Be Reborn in the Western Pure Land

1. Rebirth in the Western Pure Land is not a game for kids. You must know if you are walking on the right path so as not to increase your karmic power and go the long way.
2. Those people who wish to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss are not selfish people or those with small wishes. It is because they think that at the moment they are still ordinary people with evil karmas, if they use their own teachings and methods, they cannot change their environment and nor can they help themselves and others be liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Only when they are reborn in the Western Pure Land, have the real power and understand the ultimate reality do they need to

worry about their unfinished goal of saving all sentient beings. It is more practical this way.

3. All ordinary people are born in the Human Realm under the influence of karmic power. Each person brings his or her own “blessed rewards, causality and karmic conditions” with him or her. In addition to being as dutiful as you can, do not lose temper at will. When there is the opportunity, instruct young people to bear good wishes in their mind and do not commit crimes. Other than these things, just do whatever follows causes and conditions. At the dying moment, definitely remember to abandon bonds with family members and all the Six Sensory Objects. It is particularly difficult for parents to put down worries for their children. Not only

will worries do your children no good, but they will also prevent you from rebirth in the Western Pure Land. As long as you are successful in your practice, all your relatives and sentient beings will naturally get the benefit. That is real great merits.

4. If you want to fulfill your wish to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, at the dying moment you must completely abandon all forms in the Six Sensory Objects, believing that the Buddha will arrange everything and focusing your mind on reciting the Buddha's name. Put down everything else. "If there is but a little nostalgia left, your wish will not come true.
5. At the dying moment, "our habituated tendencies, with or without forms, will become obstructions which make us suffer se-

verely.” (There are far more people obstructed from rebirth than we usually know or see.) Therefore, we need to repent and make corrections often. Furthermore, we need to concentrate on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha and transfer the merit to removing karmic obstructions. In this way, we are walking on the right path.

6. Although some people did not practice according to the Pure Land teachings and methods, at the dying moment they got blessings from the Buddha and were reborn in the Western Pure Land merely by reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha for one or ten times. Why? That is because they did concentrate on reciting the Buddha's name with faith, vows and practice in their previous lives, but they did not thoroughly carry it out.

Therefore, they got the blessed rewards and causes and conditions to meet real good Buddhist teachers to show them the correct Pure Land teachings and methods in this life. Moreover, they got “private blessings” from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to help them get rid of all afflictions and obstructions, elevating the quality of their mind to the level of one-pointed concentration without scattering. In this situation, they were sure to be reborn in the Western Pure Land merely by reciting the name of the Buddha for one or ten times. However, very few people can have such great bliss and can shift tracks within such a short time. Therefore, we should “shift tracks earlier” and get ready for the rebirth before the dying moment. In daily life, when dealing with matters outside our mind, we should follow the customs and be as dutiful as pos-

sible, leading a normal life; however, inside our mind, it is of the utmost importance that we always remember to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. In this way, we can live a free and happy life, and at the dying moment we are sure to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

7. Those practitioners whose karmas are light can decide when and where to be reborn; they can also enter the state of “right concentration.” On the other hand, when ordinary people are at the dying moment, they feel like being in a dream where everything is clear and real but they cannot have control over their physical body. When we have a dream in daily life, we can always come back to our physical body (by waking up) if we

suffer or fear something. Nevertheless, when we are dead, we can never come back to our physical body.

8. Great good or evil persons do not have bardo bodies when they die; they go directly to the heaven or the hell.
9. If a practitioner has not awakened to the right path, whatever condition arises at the dying moment, no matter it is the form of the Buddha, Bodhisattvas or relatives, he or she “should not try to distinguish real from false, should not keep any words or images in mind and should not care about physical feelings; instead, he or she should put down everything and believe only in the Buddha’s arrangement, whole-heartedly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. As a result, he or she will be associated with the Buddha’s

Vows. This is the safest way and the way to really follow the Buddha to his Land.”

10. Although your body of karmic retribution may get sick, as long as you “genuinely believe in and put into practice” the Buddha’s teachings and his arrangement, your suffering will be greatly diminished.

11. We may die at any moment, so be ready for the last thought in life’s journey: “do nothing but recite the name of Amitabha Buddha because there is no second chance for that last thought in this life.”

12. Those reborn in the Western Pure Land in this life are reborn there right before they exhale their last breath while reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha. If they die, they will be in bardo (the state after exhaling the

last breath and before rebirth). Since obstructions increase in that period, there are fewer opportunities for them to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

13. Whether a dead person is really reborn in the Western Pure Land cannot be told merely through the appearance of that person, but through whether the state of the person's mind is associated with the Buddha and the Western Pure Land.

14. "The path" to the Western Pure Land lies in your mind, not in the achievements outside your mind. Therefore, do not be obsessed with how or where to be reborn and if there are other people reciting the Buddha's name for you at the dying moment. You should "abandon" all these worries. The most important thing is to have real wishes for rebirth

in the Western Land and deeply believe in the Buddha's arrangement. In this way, the Buddha's name can be deeply engraved in your mind. This is real "vigorous exertion," which is not shown through reciting great numbers of the Buddha's name or reciting in great speed. Nor do you need to hurry, worry or be in a state of suppression to show your "aspiration."

15.If you are not making progress in your practice, it does not mean you have not made enough effort or you have not practiced long enough; in fact, it means though you think you are reciting the Buddha's name with faith, vows and practice, actually "you do not have genuine faith and your vows to be reborn in the Western Land are not real enough, so it prevents you from putting down eve-

rything and focusing on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha.”

16. As long as you do not commit crimes, it is not a bad deed to travel “occasionally.” As long as you are moral and follow causes and conditions, travelling “occasionally” is acceptable. However, in order to travel, you need to prepare money, clothes, common medicines, toiletries, etc. Also, you may worry about your family, your job, security at home and safety on the way. Furthermore, the unsatisfactory arrangements may give rise to your aversion and delusion while the satisfactory encounters may cause your greed and obsession. Along the way, you cannot avoid the defilements of illusions and discriminations.

Although travelling is not a crime,

whatever arises in your mind generates causality. Therefore, along the way, in addition to doing right things like taking care of security, enjoying scenery with relaxation, eating, etc, wherever you are, recite the name of Amitabha Buddha and hear it as clearly as usual. It can help you control your mind and not be disturbed by the Six Sensory Objects. So can it prevent you from being indulged in your habituated tendencies and losing direction.

17. There are nine classes of mental states for people to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. Ordinary people in the Age of the Declining Dharma can rarely reach the higher classes, but since we depend both on our own reciting the name of the Buddha with faith, vows and practice and on the Vows of the Buddha to be

reborn in the Western Pure Land, it is not necessary for us to care and worry about the classes. “We are generating illusions if we do.”

18. The Buddha is clear about everything: whatever thought arises in our mind, whatever happens in our daily life, all causes and conditions and when we are going to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. Amitabha Buddha is our gracious Father, and the Western Pure Land is our ever-lasting home. “Amitabha Buddha, our gracious Father, is expecting us to return home at any moment. If we are determined to go home, as long as we care less and less about the mundane affairs in this life and are mindful of the Buddha and recite his name when whole-hearted attention is not needed (think of returning

home while reciting the Buddha's name), we can naturally be associated with the Vows of Amitabha Buddha, our gracious Father." Consequently, Amitabha, our gracious Father, will arrange everything for us. He will alleviate suffering in our life and remove all obstructions at our dying moment so as to help us return home safely. After returning to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, we will have no physical body (the false self); "instead," we will have the Dharma Body (the real self), which is forever as young as 18 years old, no longer suffering and forever enjoying all merits.

VIII. Brief Introduction to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss

1. Practitioners with achievements can go back and forth freely to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, other Pure Lands or other Worlds. They do not need to wait until they die to go there.
2. The Western Land of Ultimate Bliss and the Saha World are on the same floor, the 13th floor. Upon being reborn, wherever you are, as long as you genuinely vow to go to the Western Pure Land plus reciting the Buddha's name for one or ten times, all of a sudden, the space in our world will be transformed into the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. For example, if you are sitting in the living room or the kitchen at the moment you are being reborn; all of a sudden, the

living room or the kitchen is transformed into the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss and you are in different space then.

3. Lotus in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss are not given birth by lotus roots; they do not have substance. If a person recites the name of Amitabha Buddha in the Saha World (the mundane world) with genuine faith and vigorous exertion, a lotus belonging to this person will grow spontaneously in the Land of Ultimate Bliss. However, when the person's faith is not genuine or retrogresses, the lotus will fade spontaneously.
4. Although each one of the "people" in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss seems to have a physical body, the body is actually not physical. Its beauty is beyond description; even a person with all the most beautiful looks

in the mundane world cannot compare with it. Some “people” even carry their palace with them (the palace can be enlarged or shrunken) and the ground is completely made of gold.

5. The wonder, splendor and all the use of merits in the daily life and environment enjoyed by “people” of the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss are too wonderful to describe in words or any languages in the world (you can refer to *The Amitabha Sutra*). The best way to understand the Land is to go there in person.
6. When practicing the Buddha’s teachings in the mundane world, ordinary people usually swing between progress and retrogression; in contrast, it takes only one lifetime for practitioners in the Western Pure Land to achieve the ultimate truth. The length of “one day” is a lot longer than that in the Saha World (ac-

tually, there is no differentiation between longer and shorter time in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. The sense of length is nothing but a feeling.)

7. As long as you can be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, you can absolutely become a Buddha and reach the three non-backslidings: Non-backsliding in Mindfulness, Non-backsliding from Position Attained, and Non-backsliding from Line of Action Pursued.
8. When you are reborn in the Western Pure Land and become a Buddha there, you can choose to stay there or go to other Buddhas' Lands. You can go to any place and it is all up to you (you can make everything go your way). If you want to come back to the mundane world and be an ordinary person, before

coming back, you can choose in advance whether to be male or female, the family to be born in, the environment, the way to lead the daily life and whether to have fun in the mundane world or to save sentient beings. Everything will absolutely follow your choices. Such people, lay people or renunciants, live their daily life in the same way as ordinary people; the only difference is in mental quality. Their bodily actions, speeches and thoughts will not lead them to the cycle of the Six Realms. When their life ends, no matter how much or little progress they have made in this life, they can go back to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss and resume their status there.

9. The environment in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss is extremely magnificent and

wondrous. Upon thinking of clothing, you have clothing; upon thinking of food, you have food; whatever you want, you have it right away. And those you encounter in daily life are Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. When you miss your family in the mundane world, you can see them all at once (faster than one ringing of a phone); you can also see everything else in the mundane world and other Worlds. If you want to go back to the Saha World or travel to any other places, you get there and have fun in the blink of an eye. You can help sentient beings with comfort and pleasure while traveling to a place. The moment you want to leave for another place, you can make it immediately. There are myriads of merits for you to enjoy. Only at that time are you really “a person” of wisdom and ability to change any environment.

IX Conclusion to Previous Sections

The core message of this book is: reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith, vows and practice to change the habituated tendencies in order to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.

1. It is very difficult for us people of weak faculties to reach the level of awakening to the empty nature (the higher class) when being reborn in the Western Pure Land. Therefore, rather than being confined to piles of defilements, from now on till we breathe our last breath, whether we are free or busy and no matter what happens, we'd better "let go of whatever happens to us and devote ourselves completely to the name of Amitabha Buddha," entrusting everything to our gracious Father Amitabha (nothing is better than following the Buddha's arrangement to di-

minish sufferings in our life and be reborn in the Western Pure Land).

2. Illusions arise from a deluded mind. It is easier to find an illusion arising if we apply the method of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha clearly and hearing it clearly. Upon detecting illusions, we can focus our mind on reciting the name of the Buddha; this method can help the mind to shift channels. (It helps change habituated tendencies.) As long as our mind abides in the name of the Buddha, it will not fall into a deluded state. Therefore, all we can do is rely on the Buddha's Vows and recite the name of the Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land first. After arriving in the Western Pure Land, we can learn from the Buddha the method to see Self-Nature and achieve Buddhahood.

3. We should learn to travel alone in our life journey no matter the journey is a happy or a sad one because on our way to the end of this life, we need to bear all physical and mental feelings, such as uneasiness, sorrow, happiness, etc., no matter how many people are beside us. As long as we have genuine faith and vows to be reborn in the Western Pure Land and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to the end of our life with a strong will to go back there, Amitabha Buddha will always accompany and protect us till we return to our Western home under His guidance. Therefore, we are actually never alone.
4. “Everyone dies whether or not he or she recites the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith and vows;” however, there is a difference between people reciting the name of the

Buddha with faith and vows and those who do not. Those reciting the name of Amitabha with genuine faith and vows can be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss because they are associated with the Buddha's Vows. Those who do not have faith and vows will follow their karmic power and keep being reborn in the Six Realms.

5. In the world, you cannot find any verbal expression better than "Namo Amitabha," and neither can you find any world better than the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss after you die.
6. The Entire Control: All the eighty-four thousand methods are included in the name of Namo Amitabha. The name contains all Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, sutras, mantras, the contemplation of the Buddha, the contemplation of Amitabha Buddha's image, Chan,

Esoteric Buddhism, seeing Buddha Nature and understanding the mind, the mind not abiding in forms, morality-meditation-wisdom, faith-vows-practice, repentance, transferring one's merit to another, vowing to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss, etc.

7. Transforming all Habituated Tendencies: We do not need to spend money and energy changing habituated tendencies one after another on our own. Our fate will naturally improve, and we will naturally turn wise, awakened and positive. Above all, we are sure to be reborn in the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss.
8. Gains: We can be prevented from disasters, be guaranteed for security, remove karmic obstructions, enjoy blessed rewards and have

merits. Whatever advantages and benefits the Buddha has, we will have them all. We will not have sufferings and defilements such as illusions, habituated tendencies, birth-aging-sickness-death and transmigration in the Six Realms since the Buddha does not have them.

Short Buddhist Hymns:

1. Those holding to habituated tendencies
Move left and right with forms;
Insisting on not putting them down,
Slaves will they all become.
2. With habituated tendencies gradually abandoned,
You can live a comfortable and easy life;
Having faith in the Buddha and reciting his name
sincerely,
You are a Buddha when the mind is completely
purified.
3. When feelings are perceived, defilements arise;
When all karmas are removed, afflictions are cut
off.
A pure mind does not have Consciousnesses;
Those reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha
see the Western Pure Land.

4. The Six Sensory Objects are not ours;
Borrow them but do not regard them as real.
The name of Amitabha Buddha will lead us
home;
Go straightforward and do not make a detour.
5. The name of Amitabha Buddha radiates light
And leads us back home.
Like the shadow that follows a person,
There is no need to look for it.
6. Ordinary people are contradictory in their mind;
They unknowingly make fetters and bind them-
selves.
When we follow the Buddha's teachings, wis-
dom manifests itself;
Consequently, we can navigate on the boat of
purity.

7. A delusive mind is false;
Honestly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha
can cure it.
Being obsessed with the Six Sensory Objects
leads to transmigration;
Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with
faith and vows helps get out of it.
8. Do not live this life in vain;
Holding the name of the Buddha is the right
path.
Put down fetters and travel with ease;
Head for the Western Land comfortably and
without care.
9. Do not be attached to journeys in the Six
Realms;
Follow customs and rules of the world to have
karmas eliminated.
Be determined to be reborn in the Western Pure
Land in this life;

The next time you come to this world, you follow vows, not karmas.

10. Where do the clouds in the sky go?

In the backyard, flowers emit fragrance and birds chirp.

Spring, summer, autumn and winter are never gone;

Which valley do thunders abide in?

Letters of Encouragement

Dear Ms. Lee,

I will bypass everything else and focus on a brief introduction to “the Pure Land Teaching” for your references.

The Pure Land Method is an ever-lasting true method taught by the Buddha, which is the most mysterious, the most wondrous, the most perfect and the most instantaneous method. The method includes all methods and is thus called “perfect.” With this method, you can attain the ultimate truth in one life, which is thus named “instantaneous.” We ordinary people can also have access to it, and all Bodhisattvas cannot make it without this method. It is indeed a super high way to Buddhahood for both saints and ordinary people. Recite the Buddha’s name with faith and vows, and you can achieve liberation

in this life and have Avalokitasvara and Mahasthamaprapta as your companions. Therefore, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is a great method with which phenomena are intrinsically, the shallow is the profound, the practice and the Innate Nature are the same and the mind of an ordinary person is not different from that of a Buddha.

The bliss of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha can only be known to those reciting the name with genuine faith. They must recite the Buddha's name with absolute sincerity and complete concentration; they should not be obsessed with forms of the Six Sensory Objects. When practitioners are able to be mindful of the Buddha without thoughts and be without thoughts while mindful of the Buddha, they have reached the state of association with the Buddha. At this moment, although they recite

the Buddha's name very often, there is no form moving in their mind; although their mind is not moving, they are constantly reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha or are mindful of the Buddha. That is why they are described as being mindful of the Buddha without thoughts and being without thoughts while mindful of the Buddha. Being mindful without thoughts does not mean not being mindful. Instead, it means being mindful without the mind moving and yet there is constant mindfulness. This state is not easy to reach and is very important for a practitioner. Please do pay attention.

This is what I know about the Pure Land Teaching. I would appreciate any comments. That is all for now.

Best Regards,
Elder Jing

Dear Ms. Lee,

I'm sorry to say that I really do not know how to answer your questions, but I will try my best to briefly share my experiences over these issues with you.

A Bodhisattva has no forms and gains. If practitioners are attached to forms and ask for gains all the time, their mind cannot be associated with the formless Bodhi. If they ask for blessed rewards, they fall into decay again after the blessed rewards are used up and the effort they have made will be completely in vain. Practitioners should rely on formlessness, regarding all forms as false. Consequently, they will show their great courage and move forward bravely with absolute sincerity. In this way, they can be associated with the virtues of the heaven and the earth as well as with the brightness of the Sun and the Moon. They gain without asking

for it. They have neither forms nor non-forms for their teachings, saving all sentient beings without the thought of saving them. This is called leaving forms upon encountering forms. A person whose mind bears no forms is called a Bodhisattva.

Practitioners should work on their mind. When the mind is purified, they are transformed from ordinary people into saints. When the mind is not pure, defilements arise and karmas will be made; they thus become ordinary people. Therefore, the only thing that distinguishes an ordinary person from a saint is “the mind.” If you apply the mind that recites the name of Amitabha Buddha to destroy all the seeds of illusory thoughts until no views arise and all illusory thoughts are removed, the true mind naturally manifests itself. As a result, your own Buddha Nature can be one with that of all other

Elder Jing's Words

Buddhas.

We will talk about other questions later. I will stop here.

Best Regards,
Elder Jing

Dear Ms. Lee,

I will explain Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva's way of practice for your references.

Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva said that he “attained ‘Forbearance Based on the Cognition of the Non-arising of all Phenomena’ with a mind that recites the name of Amitabha Buddha.” He did not rely on any other methods; he achieved “Forbearance Based on the Cognition of the Non-arising of all Phenomena” merely with a mind that is mindful of the Buddha. Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva has been in the Saha World recruiting all those mindful of Amitabha Buddha to return to the Western Pure Land. Therefore, as long as we recite the name of Amitabha Buddha, we are blessed by Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva. By reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha once, we can include all the Six Faculties (eye, ear, nose, tongue,

body and mind) in the name and have them all purified. If we recite the name of Amitabha Buddha steadily with sincerity and single-mindedness, the purified state of the mind can naturally persist. This is the most perfectly penetrating way to attain "Samadhi." The "Samadhi" mentioned here does not mean the common right concentration and mental unity; instead, it means "Great Concentration of Heroic Valor." The nature of the effect of this type of concentration is called "Great Buddha Peak" while the nature of its cause is called "Heroic Valor." Those who practice "Heroic Valor" are called Bodhisattvas, and those having attained the Great Buddha Peak are Tathagatas. Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva said, "To attain Great Concentration of Heroic Valor, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is the best method." Therefore, we can tell that ordinary

people can attain the unsurpassed wondrous result of “Forbearance Based on the Cognition of the Non-arising of all Phenomena” and “Great Concentration of Heroic Valor” by reciting the name of the Buddha with faith and vows. So, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is the best of all expedient methods.

Please take what I will say from now on as something for your personal references only. Do not share it with other people for fear that Buddhist learners might feel disturbed. Please! Please! Looking forward to your comments. I will stop here.

Best Regards,
Elder Jing

Dear Ms. Lee,

When we see Buddha Nature, we have not yet reached the ultimate goal on the path to Buddhahood. We still need to apply our illuminating wisdom to remove habituated tendencies step by step. We can cultivate our mind through defilements and develop our wisdom and power through difficulties. Only in the Six Sensory Object and miseries can our alertness be raised and aspirations be inspired. We should be perseverant and hard-working, constantly strengthening ourselves and removing our habituated tendencies. Mental disturbances derived from mistaken views are from our Self-Obsession; with understanding, we can empty them. Mental disturbances developed from mistaken perceptions are from our Self-Love; we can stay away from them. The more difficult it is to remove our habituated

tendencies, the stronger determination we should have to remove them. Go against ourselves often and be patient with obstructions. As a result, we make progress. When we go on smoothly with our practice, we will certainly come to a state where our mind turns chaotic, our desires gush out uncontrollably and our afflictions arise. This is because the seeds hidden in our Eighth Consciousness are churned up by our practice. Do not have any doubt that this state will bring in progress. As long as we know that these phenomena are empty in nature, neither take nor reject them and deal with them calmly, the more seeds we churn up the more mud will be removed. After the seeds being churned up for thousands of times, we will naturally reach the state of motionlessness.

Because defilements and habituated tendencies are deeply rooted, it is not enough to

rely solely on ourselves; we also need to depend on the Buddha. The most convenient shortcut and the most perfect and instantaneous way is to recite “Namo Amitabha.” Gather our mind and do the recitation attentively. Recite the name no matter we are happy, bothered by defilements or doing trivial things without the need of exerting the mind. Beginning practitioners are likely to lose track of the recitation. Under such circumstances, recite when we remember it. Do not care about details; just keep reciting with a purified mind and do it honestly. After a while, our mind will naturally become pure and attain the state of One-pointed Concentration without Scattering.

Ordinary people often think of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha as superstitious. They do not know that the name of Amitabha Buddha is an effective way to break their greed,

aversion, delusion and illusions. When their illusions are gone, their wisdom illuminates naturally. The wondrous functions of wisdom are beyond imagination of those who do not practice Buddhism. Among those who are learning Buddhism, some consider the Pure Land Teaching superficial. They do not know that the Buddha's teachings are undifferentiated and interpenetrating. Their merits manifest in everyday life. If we cannot see the merits, it means we are obsessed with our knowledge and views. In fact, if we can recite the name of Amitabha Buddha constantly without abiding in anything else, it means Vigorous Exertion; One-pointed Concentration without Scattering is Meditative Absorption; and seeing things in clarity means wisdom. Only people who have seen Buddha Nature can recite the name of Amitabha Buddha to its full effect. However, if we can recite the

name constantly, we can certainly reach the goal and receive its benefits. It is said in *Mahasamnipata Sutra*, “Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is the unsurpassed profound and wondrous Chan.” On the other hand, people practicing meditation or contemplation have to be completely on their own, and it is not an easy thing. They have to cut off all defilements developed from mistaken views and perceptions so as to be liberated from the cycle of birth and death in the Six Realms. In the process of practice, there will be all kinds of unpredictable conditions happening. Without Eye of the Way, it is likely that practitioners get tricked and waste their effort. As for reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, because of the combination of both the practitioners’ own effort and the Buddha’s blessing, as long as we recite the Buddha’s name incessantly without losing track

of it, no illusory thoughts can slip into the recitation. As a result, there will be no obstructions along the way to the final goal. The wondrous function of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is indeed incredible. It is praised in all sutras. I hope beginning learners of Buddhism can notice it. If they can thus have faith in this Teaching, they can enjoy its benefits to the end of this life.

The above is my understanding, which is not yet mature. I feel sorry if I have disturbed the learners' purity of mind. And I apologize for that!

Best Regards,
Elder Jing

On Prajna Pure Land and On Prajna Reality

Chapter one

1. Although the Buddha will not abandon any human beings, only those truly believe in and are influenced by and responsive to the Buddha can be saved.
2. Those reciting the name of Amitabha with sincerity and really changing their habituated tendencies are people who truly have faith in and are influenced by and responsive to the Buddha.
3. When you are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, do not let your mind go outwards. There will be no dangers, and you will not do wrong things or speak wrong words. Everything is safe with this method, but only peo-

ple with genuine faith will reach the destination.

4. If you want to understand the reality of life, you can get to the goal merely by reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha until arriving at the state of One-pointed Concentration without Scattering.
5. Buddha Dharma is all-inclusive; whatever you encounter in daily life is included. As long as you reach the state of One-pointed Concentration without Scattering through reciting the name of the Buddha, you can attain the state of omniscience.
6. When you are reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, nothing else but the name of the Buddha should be in your mind; this is called "One-pointed Concentration." (If you recite

the name of the Buddha in this way, habituated tendencies will naturally disappear.)

7. When there is no illusory thought in the mind, it is called “without Scattering.” (When you have genuine faith in reciting the name of the Buddha, illusory thoughts will naturally be diminished.)
8. Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha is the most wondrous way to reject the Six Sensory Objects and blend with enlightenment and return to the origin. It suits lay practitioners even more. Lay practitioners need to deal with many mundane affairs, so reciting the Buddha’s name is the most convenient method for them. They can do prostration and recitation in the morning and evening, making dedication and vows. In addition, they can do recitation anytime and anywhere

in their daily life, such as walking, standing, sitting, lying, eating, dressing, etc. When the location is clean, recite either aloud or in silence. When the location is not clean, it is better that they recite in silence. The merit of reciting in silence is the same as that of reciting aloud.

9. The wonder of the Pure Land Teaching lies in the fact that you can apply the mundane dharma without leaving Buddha Dharma and you can realize Buddha Dharma without giving up the mundane dharma. Applying this method, you can leave all obsessions and attain myriad merits, with a mind devoid of all other thoughts and worries and naturally unconditional.

10. Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha can purify your three karmic activities and re-

move all defilements and mental illnesses. If you can collect your mind and focus on the recitation until your mind is empty and all external objects are annihilated, your mental state will be pure and your defilements and karmic obstructions will naturally be eliminated.

Chapter Two

1. There is nothing special about the Pure Land Teaching. The only requirement is your absolute sincerity. With the method, you are sure to be led to the Pure Land by Amitabha Buddha while your karmas still exist.
2. Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with absolute sincerity means reciting the Buddha's name with faith, vows and practice; consequently, you are sure to be reborn in the Western Pure Land.
3. Since you have genuine faith and urgent vows to be reborn in the Pure Land, you must hold "Namo Amitabha" with absolute sincerity. Whatever you are doing, walking, standing, sitting, lying down, speaking, silent, moving, motionless, eating, dressing, urinating, etc.,

do not leave the name of Amitabha Buddha. You need to make your mind completely occupied with the Buddha and make the Buddha the mind: The mind and the Buddha are inseparable; the mind and the Buddha are one. If you can be mindful of the Buddha and his name uninterruptedly until the moment when your mind is empty and the Buddha shows up, you can realize Samadhi in this very life and be reborn in the Pure Land in the highest class at the end of this life, which is the greatest benefit a practitioner can attain from his or her practice.

Chapter Three

1. Maha-Stamaprapta Bodhisattva's recitation method requires that practitioners contain the Six Faculties and recite the name of Amitabha Buddha constantly with a purified mind: the mind needs to be clear while doing recitation (Faculty of Thought), the tongue needs to utter the name clearly (Gustatory Faculty), the ears need to hear the name clearly (Aural Faculty). Contain the mind, the tongue and the ears and collect them with the Buddha's name; as a result, your eyes will not look around, your nose will not be distracted by different odors and your body will not turn lazy. This is called "Containing the Six Faculties." When you recite the name of the Buddha with the Six Faculties under control, though you cannot empty your mind com-

pletely, your mind is a lot purer than those who do not contain the Six Faculties. If you do it often and incessantly, you may attain One-pointed Concentration with some effort. With greater effort, you can attain Samadhi, which means Right Concentration.

2. How do we reach the state of being mindful of the Buddha without interruption? Once we have faith in the Buddha, we no longer have doubt and defiled thoughts and are able to maintain purity of mind; this is called uninterruptedness.
3. When we keep reciting “Namo Amitabha” until the mind that can recite and the Buddha that is recited are both unattainable, this is Cessation. When the mind that can recite and the Buddha that is recited are both clearly perceived, this is Clear Observation. We

should know that when the mind is crystal clear, it is exactly when it is unattainable and that when the mind is unattainable, it is exactly when it is crystal clear. Right at this moment, Cessation is Clear Observation, and Clear Observation is Cessation. Practicing Cessation and Clear Observation at the same time is the limitless light and immeasurable life of the Equipose of Concentration and Wisdom. If we can apply the Pure Land Teaching to practice Cessation and Clear Observation, we are destined to become a Buddha now or in the future.

4. Being mindful of Amitabha Buddha with the greatest sincerity means the practice of intentional good deeds; reciting the name of the Buddha means the practice of oral good deeds; and joining palms to worship the

Buddha means the practice of bodily good deeds. With these three types of good deeds, eight billion kalpas of the heavy penalty of birth and death can be eradicated.

5. If we save people all day long without doing any saving acts, are mindful of the Buddha all day long without being aware of any Buddha and pray to be reborn in the Western Pure Land all day long without making vows and praying for the rebirth, this is called Great Enlightened Mind. If practitioners can reach the state of having their mind never leave the Buddha and having the Buddha never leave their mind, with their mind being the Buddha and functioning like the Buddha, they are sure to realize Right Enlightenment.

Chapter Four

1. All sentient beings are with different faculties while the Buddha's kindness and compassion are with no end. If we can really recite His name with absolute sincerity, at our dying moment, our vows will come true unexpectedly. These words, when spoken to those with genuine faith and urgent vows, can benefit them; however, when they are said to those with only shallow wholesome roots and not yet completely devoted to the Pure Land Teaching, they may consider it impossible for them to be reborn in the Western Pure Land and thus withdraw from the method. The Buddha's teachings should be taught in accord with a person's basic religious capacity; otherwise, they become gossips.

2. Intelligent practitioners apply combined practice of Chan and the Pure Land Method, with emphasis on the Pure Land Teaching. Ordinary practitioners, on the other hand, do not need to probe into all the profound sutras and discourses. These people should just stop making evil karmas, do all good deeds and focus on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha to be reborn in the Western Pure Land. These practitioners will be able to walk on the supramundane path without abandoning household affairs. Although the practice looks commonplace, its benefit is incredible and it can enable ordinary men and women to penetrate into the Buddha's wisdom and be associated with the profundity of reality if they concentrate on reciting the name of the Buddha. The benefit they attain is far more than that of those people

with great intelligence who always apply their Consciousnesses to make discriminations and think. Ordinary men and women who recite the name of the Buddha can gain benefit more easily. The Chan Teaching does not suit people nowadays. If they do learn the method, they might have superficial understanding of the method but they absolutely cannot instantaneously understand their mind and see their own Buddha Nature. Why? Firstly, there are no great Buddhist teachers to instruct and support them and help them make choices. Secondly, practitioners do not know the real meaning of Chan. The mind of people in the Age of the Declining Dharma is vulgar and base, and they are likely to fall victim to this disease. Please dedicate yourselves completely to the Pure Land Teaching, and you will certainly attain great benefit in

the future.

3. “Reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha” is also a method to cultivate energy and spirit; furthermore, it is a method to contemplate on our original looks. Why? Our mind is mostly in a state of a mess. If we recite the name of the Buddha with the greatest sincerity, all the defiled and delusive thoughts will gradually diminish. When all the defiled and delusive thoughts are gone, the mind returns to Oneness. In this state, we are naturally full of energy and spirits. When we start trying to recite the name of Amitabha Buddha without knowing that reciting the Buddha’s name can cease illusions, in the beginning we might feel there are all kinds of illusions arising; however, if we keep doing it, there will be no such illusions.

Chapter Five

1. If we want to be reborn in the Western Pure Land, we should put down this mundane world and the excessively delusive mind. Bodhisattvas are able to save sentient beings in the cycle of birth and death because they are Bodhisattvas. If we ordinary people want to assume this mission, we cannot even save ourselves, let alone saving other people. There are many good Buddhist teachers falling victim to this disease when they think they have attained the mind of enlightenment (Bodhi). We should know it is better that we recite for rebirth first. If we want to save people without vowing to be reborn in the Western Pure Land first, we had better be real Bodhisattvas; otherwise, we will do great harm to the world. An excessively delusive

mind is a big obstruction to a real practitioner. We should be aware of it.

2. Fear and nightmares are omens of the arising of evil karmas done in previous lives. Although there are good and evil situations in our current life, we can change them by changing ourselves. When we can focus on reciting the Buddha's name despite the arising of an evil karma, we can turn the evil karma into a good one. We should transform evil karmas made in previous lives into mentors of this life. It is a pity that most people are bound by karmas and cannot change them. As a result, they become even worse after encountering evil karmas and generate still more afflictions.
3. In the Dharma Realm, there is originally no obstruction between phenomena and nou-

menon. If there is no dharma, how are people saved? If practitioners hold to non-dharma, it is an obsession with emptiness; thus, they are in favor of non-dharma and are not different from those obsessed with Four Forms of the Ego (the Ego-Form, the Alter-Form, the Multibeing-Form and the Lifespan-Form). In this way, how can Buddha Nature, which is at the same time empty and bright, manifest itself? These are unwise people, so how can they attain Buddhahood? We should neither be obsessed with forms nor with emptiness; instead, we should cut off both obsessions. We should not be attached to phenomena of birth and death and get stuck in words; nor should we be attached to non-dharma and get stuck in emptiness. Please bear in mind that before seeing Buddha Nature, we should not leave words; however, after seeing Buddha

Nature, we should put down all forms. It is just like before a person is ferried over to the other shore, he or she needs a boat; however, when this person arrives at the other shore, this boat should be abandoned and no longer used. We should abandon even the Buddha Dharmas that ferry us over to the Other Shore, not to mention that originally there is no dharma. It is a problem when people do not believe in a method that can save them, but it is also a problem when people are not able to put down the method that has saved them. In a word, if we are obsessed with any form when pursuing Buddhahood, we are far away from the ultimate truth.

4. All phenomena are empty. If we consider them real, how can we explain the existence of the nature of enlightenment, which is

ethereal and mystical? However, the empty nature of enlightenment is not really empty because it has the function of telepathy. So, how can we say that it is non-existent? It is both existent and non-existent, and it is neither existent nor non-existent. Only the dharma that we have drawn from the above conclusions is real. So, where can we find this real dharma? In fact, the dharma of the unsurpassed enlightenment is in our innate enlightened nature. It is not created by humans and is an unconditioned dharma. Since ancient times, all sages and saints have attained the fruit of ultimate enlightenment through unconditioned dharmas. That is why there is nothing to attain when one reaches Buddhahood and why the dharma to attain Buddhahood is never fixed.

Chapter Six

1. Bodhisattvas, who are selfless and patient, make all kinds of mundane merits. Whatever merits they have made return to the true emptiness of Prajna (supramundane wisdom). Bodhisattvas are never obsessed with these merits; they merely offer benefits to countless sentient beings without being aware of benefitting them. That is why they do not have obsessions.
2. All conditions being non-existent means all phenomena are empty in nature. The nature of phenomena being empty indicates that no matter where you are, you do not apply your mind. If you have attained the state of not applying your mind no matter what is happening, it means there is nothing you can

attain. Why? Since Self-Nature is empty, there is no form to be obtained. There being no form to be obtained is the ultimate reality, which is the wondrous body of Tathagata.

3. Tathagata ferries over sentient beings, making them enlightened with their true nature by applying the only mental dharma of absolute emptiness and making absolute emptiness the ultimate reality. The essence of the ultimate reality is empty and with no shape to observe and no form to see; however, it has myriads of wondrous functions, which manifest themselves constantly, are perfect everywhere and are not empty. Therefore, we should not seek Buddha Dharma when obsessed with forms; not being obsessed with forms means Self-Nature and Tathagata.
4. Being mindful means not applying the mind

no matter where you are. When you reach this state of mind, you are liberated from birth and death. What does it mean by seeing without seeing anything? When you see any phenomena and are not attached to them and do not desire or hate them, this is what seeing without seeing anything means. When you get to this state of mind, you have attained the Buddha Eye. When you see forms and you desire or hate them, you are in a state of seeing things, which is called the Eye of Sentient Beings. Likewise, this is also the case with the other five Faculties.

5. A sutra says: “If you want to reach the Pure Land, you should purify your mind.” What does “purify your mind” mean? When you do not apply your mind no matter where you are, it is the state of purity. When you attain this

state of mind and you do not regard it as a state of purity, this is called non-state-of-purity.

6. How do practitioners realize enlightenment? When they do not hold to the outward forms and sounds and do not give rise to illusions innerly, they have realized the enlightenment. When they have attained enlightenment without regarding it as an achievement, it is called non-realization.

7. What is the mind of liberation from birth and death? When there is no liberation from birth and death in our mind and no non-liberation from birth and death in our mind, it is called real liberation from birth and death.

Chapter Seven

1. All phenomena are originally empty; if you think you have attained anything, it means you are obsessed with forms. If you think you have realized enlightenment, it means you still have a self. When both self and phenomena are empty, you are in accord with Bodhi.
2. The Buddha teaches “unobtainable” because if there is a dharma to obtain the mind of enlightenment, practitioners will be bound by the dharma. When dharmas are “unobtainable,” practitioners can attain the mind of enlightenment through multitudes of dharmas and will eventually be liberated.
3. Sravakas have been obsessed with phenomena for long and are attached to conditioned

dharmas. They do not know that all phenomena are originally empty. When they suddenly hear it is said in a sutra, “No phenomena have ever been born,” they attain Buddhahood right on the spot.

4. Nescience means the state of not knowing, not knowing the reality of perfect enlightenment, not knowing all phenomena are illusions, not knowing sentient beings and Buddhas are equal and not knowing self and phenomena are both empty. That is why the state is called nescience. When illusions and defilements are completely removed, it means nescience is forever cut off. When the Dharma Body manifests itself, Buddhahood is obtained.

Chapter Eight

1. Buddha Dharma advocates the meaning of emptiness. Emptiness is the essence of all phenomena in the universe, which means the enlightened nature, the essence of myriad existences, the dharma nature, the true nature, the absolute fundamental reality, the non-arising of dharmas, the unconditioned dharmas, the pure mind, not being polluted by any defilements and the pure Dharma Body.

Emptiness is the essence and the realm of True Thusness, which cannot be understood with mundane wisdom and intelligence and cannot be reached by a discriminating mind. Neither can it be known by thoughts and inferences nor by seeing, hearing, cognition and knowing. It neither

selects nor rejects anything; it is detached from forms like languages, names and mental cognition of the environment. It cannot be expressed in words and ceases to exist when the mind starts functioning. It treats all phenomena equally, and it is nothing but perfect tranquility. Its essence is like the empty space while its amount equals to the Dharma Realm. It is never defiled and never conditioned; it is countless and limitless. It is Thusness, the original enlightened nature. In the absolute emptiness, the Six Supernatural Powers can be applied without obstructions, wisdom manifests in all places and wondrous functions are limitless. The above is what prajna wisdom of emptiness means.

2. The wondrousness of the mind dharma is beyond descriptions in language. The Bud-

dha ferries over sentient beings through language, but the Buddha's language is nothing but parables. If we regard his language as reality, we are treating a shadow as a real person and thus lose track of the real person. We should know that Buddha Dharma is taught in between lines, and that is where we can find Buddha Nature.

There is inherently nothing to say about Buddha Nature. If we do not hold to any forms and our mind abides in nowhere, we are teaching the Dharma. Teaching without uttering any words is the real teaching.

Chapter Nine

1. Bodhisattvas should not abide in any Dharma they are practicing. When they are doing almsgiving, their eyes do not abide in forms, their ears not in sounds, their nose not in odors, their tongue not in flavors, their body not in touches and their mind not in phenomena. Bodhisattvas on the way to Buddhahood should not abide in the forms of the Six Sensory Objects. If Bodhisattvas on the way to Buddhahood are not attached to forms while doing almsgiving, they can be awake to the real emptiness and thus attain the unsurpassed enlightenment, possessing unlimited blessings, wisdom and morality, which is beyond the imagination of human beings.
2. If we do everything without any deluded

thoughts while living in the mundane world and we let our Buddha Nature function on its own, this is called living a mundane life with a supramundane mind.

3. Our body is a city. Our eyes, ears, nose and tongue are the gates. These are the five outer gates, and the mind is the inner gate. Our mind is the ground while our Buddha Nature is the king. The king lives on the mind ground. When there is Buddha Nature, there is the king. When there is no Buddha nature, the king is gone. When there is Buddha Nature, there is body and mind. When Buddha nature is gone, the body and mind ceases to exist. Therefore, seek to be a Buddha in our own Buddha Nature; do not seek the Buddha outside ourselves.
4. Ordinary people are loaded with heavy karmas

and do not know the empty nature of the Five Aggregates. People of great wisdom do not rely on the Five Aggregates and thus all afflictions are removed. When One Reality manifests itself, all wondrous merits show up perfectly.

Chapter Ten

1. “Spirituality” is the most wondrous and ethereal awareness; it is not the same as “soul.” Soul changes constantly while spirituality never changes. Awareness is the inherent nature of all sentient beings. Because of this nature, they can perceive and understand things; without this nature, sentient beings will be like wood and stone. When people die, the nature continues to exist and that is why they can be reborn.
2. When one sees matters and desires them, one is blended with them and creates a form. When one hears sounds and desires them, one is blended with them and creates another form. Ordinary people blend themselves with all phenomena while Bodhisattvas never do;

they separate from them instead. When there is the blending, there is birth and death. When there is no blending, there is liberation, which is neither birth nor death.

3. The Dharma Body is our innate pure nature. Our mind contains all empty space and all universes. It has no forms and no shapes and is beyond inferences. Bodhisattvas on the way to Buddhahood should leave all forms. They should not give rise to thoughts when abiding in forms of sights, sounds, odors, flavors, touches and dharmas. If they give rise to thoughts while abiding in the Sensory Objects, they are defiled and can rarely stay pure. We should keep our mind constantly noticing whether it is clearly awake like a clean mirror reflecting all objects that come to its front and becomes empty again when

the objects leave. In this way, we can naturally stay absolutely pure.

Chapter Eleven

1. If we do almsgiving without abiding in any phenomena, the cause is profound. When we see the Buddha without seeing His form, the effect is profound. When both cause and effect are profound, true nature manifests itself.
2. Unconditioned dharmas are the unsurpassed Bodhi, Nirvana, Tathagata and the Diamond Prajna Paramita. Practitioners in later days usually mistakenly regard “unconditioned” as merely “empty and still;” therefore, we know that the attainment of Bodhi depends on the practitioner, not the dharma. Tathagata defines “Buddha” as the totality of the mind and defines Buddha Dharma as the great functioning of the mind. They are the real

Buddha and the real Dharma. Real Buddhas have no shapes while real Dharmas have no names.

3. The reality of Thusness is a true view, and Thusness means liberation. Buddha Nature is permanent and never changes. The form of Self is the root of all forms. Since the form of Self is non-existent, what else can exist, what dharma can be obtained, what sentient being needs to be saved and what earth needs to be dignified? With this view, we can subdue forms without the form of subduing and abiding without the form of abiding until there is nothing to be emptied. This is incredible. In this state, practitioners can be called real Bodhisattvas and consequently should receive assurance as a Buddha.
4. It is said in sutras, “All forms are non-form.”

Once we are enlightened, forms mean emptiness. When we are aware that all phenomena are empty, our mind naturally turns mindful of reality. When a thought arises, we are aware of it; when we are aware of it, it is gone. This is a wondrous method to practice.

Chapter Twelve

1. For ordinary people, there is birth and death; there must be birth after death. Therefore, ordinary people's birth and death is like the shadow which always follows the body and will never cease. Saints and sages have birth and death too; however, after they die, they return to real emptiness. The birth and death of saints and sages is like thunders in the sky; they manifest themselves and cease on their own, which will not bother any objects. People in the mundane world do not know the reality of birth and death, thinking of birth and death as disasters. This is all because they are not enlightened.
2. The mundane dharmas are delusive causality while the supramundane dharmas are real

causality. We all know that among the Buddha's teachings, causality is the most crucial. Macroscopically speaking, causality brings about the cycle of birth and death; microscopically speaking, whatever you do, a word or a movement, has its causality. Therefore, people should constantly reflect on themselves and put the Buddha's teachings into practice. Life is too short to waste and causality has everything to do with people living in the mundane world. Those who deeply believe in causality will eventually have their Buddha Nature manifested brightly.

3. The Dharma taught by the Buddha is about our innate nature of real emptiness, which has no forms and does not abide anywhere. It is the wondrous Dharma of neither existence

nor non-existence. Its subtle part lies in that it cannot be reached by reasoning and cannot be argued with words. When people practice in accord with the Dharma, its retribution is incredible; they can penetrate all phenomena and see their original nature. As a result, the origin of transmigration is thoroughly cut off, and practitioners can reach the Other Shore, where all Buddhas are.

Chapter Thirteen

1. The true spirit of Mahayana Buddhism is all about emptiness and non-emptiness. No-self means emptiness, and kindness and compassion mean non-emptiness. When no-self is understood with kindness and compassion remaining, the state is called the emptiness of non-emptiness. Although kindness and compassion are being practiced, the self is not obsessed; this state is called the non-emptiness of emptiness. Therefore, when kindness and compassion are practiced with the obsession of a self, it is not genuine kindness and compassion. When kindness and compassion are practiced without a self, that is the genuine kindness and compassion.
2. The form of a body mentioned by Tathagata is

nothing but a delusive shape, not the real body. All forms in the mundane world are false and not real, delusive and not true. They are impermanent. If we break all forms with correct views, knowing forms are not real, the real Essence manifests itself. Without inferences, we can illuminate inwardly and contemplate thoroughly and thus see the Dharma Body of Tathagata within our physical body. Why bother holding to a form and regarding it as Tathagata?

3. Wisdom Eye means the insight of Prajna wisdom. With Wisdom Eye, we can understand the empty nature of everything. When we attain Wisdom Eye, we can see that all phenomena are empty.
4. The Prajna absolute fundamental reality is the wondrous illuminating innate nature. It is

like space, which cannot be seen through forms, but can give rise to an illuminating mind. Tathagata said that is the reality; the form without any form is the reality. If we can be detached from all forms of phenomena, our mind turns empty and still, which is the state of enlightenment. Buddhas are thus born.

Chapter Fourteen

1. The Dharma is Tathagata's body. We should contemplate on the nature of dharmas. The nature of dharmas is the nature of emptiness, which is the cardinal meaning of the body of all Buddhas. If we can illuminate inwardly and contemplate thoroughly, practicing in this way with the understanding that all phenomena are empty, seeing without seeing anything, hearing without hearing anything, knowing without knowing anything and realizing without realizing anything, we see the Dharma Body of Tathagata. Therefore, how can Tathagata be seen through forms? We should know that the truth spoken by the Buddha, the unsurpassed correct enlightenment, is profoundly wondrous and difficult to express; there is no fixed teaching called the

Teaching of Perfect Enlightenment, and practitioners realize Perfect Enlightenment in different ways. Tathagata makes use of expedients to lead sentient beings back to their true nature; all those expedients are cures in accord with their diseases.

2. The Buddha talked about three forms — human, dharma and emptiness — separately or in combination, first in combination and then separately or first separately and then in combination, with separation in combination and with combination in separation. He repeatedly reminded us of them, eagerly admonishing and exhorting us; we should contemplate on them attentively.
3. We should let people know that the Buddha's teachings emphasize attaining enlightenment on our own, not seeking reality in words.

Even terms are false. The dharma of Prajna wisdom lies only in our Self-Nature. We should attain enlightenment by ourselves; there is nothing to express in words. It is not that the Buddha does not want to preach anything; there is really nothing to preach.

4. Concerning liberating ourselves from birth and death, we must start from our Self-Nature; whenever we are, we must be constantly mindful of purifying our mind and improving our behaviors. Not until we see our Dharma Body, that is, the Self-Nature Buddha, can we ferry over ourselves. In this way, we will not waste this life of ours.
5. If we want to attain omniscience, we need to achieve Meditative Absorption of One Characteristic, which means never abiding in any form wherever we are, never desiring,

hating, taking or rejecting any form and never thinking of gains and losses; we just stay calm and quiet, humble and indifferent to fame and fortune. This state is called Meditative Absorption of One Form. And, if we can keep our mind pure and straightforward wherever we are and no matter we are walking, standing, sitting and lying down, with the mind unmoved and really becoming a pure land, this state is called Meditative Absorption of One Practice. If we practice these two kinds of absorption, it will be like that we have seeds hidden in the ground, which will nurture them and let them ripen into fruit. So are these two kinds of absorption.

6. Dharma Body, Reward Body and Transformation Body are one body. If we can see

them in our Self-Nature, it is the cause for us to become a Buddha or a Bodhisattva. In our Self-Nature, we can be detached from the Five Desires. The moment we see our Self-Nature is the moment we see reality. We preach to ferry over people and benefit them in accord with conditions, without knowing that we can preach, that people are listening and that there are the Buddha's teachings; this is called not abiding in forms. When we are able not to abide in forms, we do not abide in the Six Sensory Objects. We must know that people without defilements no longer have mundane concerns. How can such people be trapped in birth and death?

Chapter Fifteen

1. If we want to know the state of a Buddha, we should purify our mind to the extent that it is like empty space.
2. Only when we can be detached from the Six Sensory Objects will it be possible for us to attain Buddhahood. At that time, we can penetrate all phenomena, see the origin of our nature and inherit the seed of the Buddha. The truth of Thusness is the real view. Thusness means complete freedom. The essence of Self-Nature is permanent; it never changes.
3. Wherever we are, do not give rise to any thought; this is the empty nature of Self-Nature, or absolute fundamental reality, which is the wondrous form of Tathagata. It

is said in *The Diamond Sutra*, “Being detached from all forms means all Buddhas.”

4. The essence of Buddha Dharma does not lie in words, but it cannot be attained without words. However, we do not need to study much; merely *The Diamond Sutra* is enough.
5. If we want to improve our understanding of the Buddha’s teachings, all dharmas should be acquired, including those of an ordinary person to those of a Buddha. However, if we want to improve our practice, we had better choose a teaching that is both in accord with reality and suitable for us, concentrating on the teaching so as to attain enlightenment soon and get real benefit. Otherwise, it will be extremely difficult for us to be liberated from the cycle of birth and death, even after practicing for eons and eons of years. Among

all teachings that are in accord with reality and suit us, reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha with faith and vows to be reborn in the Western Pure Land is the unsurpassed.

6. That the mind is not separated from the Buddha and the Buddha is not separated from the mind means the mind follows the Buddha and does not follow delusions. If we reach the state of total removal of delusions and attain complete enlightenment, we achieve Correct Enlightenment.
7. It is said in *The Diamond Sutra*, “The past mind is unattainable, the present mind is unattainable and the future mind is unattainable.” These three kinds of mind are all delusive, so they can be divided into past, present and future. Since the beginningless time, the real mind has never changed;

therefore, it cannot be differentiated as past, present and future. “Unattainable” means emptiness. If we felt hungry and thought of food, it was the past mind. If we are eating food and tasting its flavors, it is the present mind. If we have not thought of food, the mind of wanting food does not exist yet and it is the future mind. These three kinds of mind deteriorate moment by moment and are thus unattainable.

If Bodhisattvas on the way to Buddhahood want to know where to abide, just follow my instruction of not abiding in any form and steadfastly abide in that state without ever retrogressing. Whatever can be attached to belongs to the Six Sensory Objects; not abiding anywhere is where our original mind steadfastly abides.

Conclusion

The teaching of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha advocates that our mind's nature is like empty space, which never changes. Although it never changes, all its thoughts are in accord with causes and conditions. If our thoughts do not follow causes and conditions of the Buddha Realm, they will follow those of the other Nine Realms instead. Because causes and conditions vary a lot, retributions are thus very different. Although the essence is always the same, the forms and functions are in extreme difference. It is just like empty space in the sky: when the sun shines, it is bright; when the clouds gather, it becomes dark. Though empty space neither increases nor decreases because of the sun and the clouds, the forms revealed through obstructions vary greatly. Because of

this reason, Shakyamuni Buddha wanted all sentient beings to be mindful of the Buddha and thus said, “If sentient beings remember the Buddha and are mindful of the Buddha, they will see the Buddha now or in the future and are not far away from the Buddha.” He also said, “The body of every Buddha is the body of the Dharma Realm; it can enter the mind of all sentient beings. Therefore, when we are thinking of the Buddha, our mind is the thirty-two marks and eighty characteristics of the Buddha; the mind makes the Buddha and the mind is the Buddha. The correct peerless enlightenment of all Buddhas comes from their mind; when following the conditions of the Buddha, the mind makes the Buddha and is the Buddha. If the mind follows the conditions of a sentient being, the mind makes a sentient being and is a sentient being. People with such understanding will

definitely recite the name of the Buddha.

The teaching of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha makes use of Tathagata's great name of myriad merits as its conditions; this great name of myriad merits is the unsurpassed enlightenment which Tathagata has awakened to. Making use of the Buddha's state of ultimate realization as the cause for practice will certainly lead to the achievement of ultimate enlightenment, in which cause and effect are perfectly fused together. It is just like a person responsible for making scent always carries the fragrance on his or her body. The efficiency and power of this teaching surpass those of all other teachings taught by Shakyamuni Buddha. The teaching of reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha relies on power from practitioners themselves and the Buddha. Prac-

titioners who have cut off all defilements and those who will be reborn in the Western Pure Land with karmas can both apply this teaching. This teaching seems simple and common; even ordinary men and women can gain benefit from it. However, it is at the same time extremely mysterious and wondrous; even virtually enlightened Bodhisattvas can also benefit from the teaching. Therefore, all people are good enough and able to practice it. The teaching is easy while the achievement is great. The effort needed is little while the result is fast to attain, which is really a special teaching among all the other teachings taught by Shakyamuni Buddha and which cannot be evaluated side by side with teachings for general instructions on cultivating precepts, meditation and wisdom. People in the Age of the Declining Dharma have fewer blessings and less wisdom, with more obstruc-

tions and heavier karmas. If they do not apply this teaching, it can be extremely difficult for them to cut off defilements and attain enlightenment completely on their own to be liberated from birth and death and reborn in the Western Pure Land.

Repent and Transfer Merit

May the merit and virtue accrued from this work
Adorn Amitabha Buddha's Pure Land,
Repay the four great kindnesses above,
And relieve the suffering of those on the three
paths below.

May all those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind;

When this body of karmic retribution comes to an
end,

All can be reborn in the Land of Ultimate Bliss.

(We earnestly request that Amitabha
Buddha bless us with His kind and
compassionate majestic powers. We
wish to transfer the merit of our prac-
tice to all sentient beings throughout
the Void and in all Dharma Realms.)

I vow to be reborn in the Western Pure Land,
With a nine-graded lotus flower as my parents.
When the lotus blooms, I will see Amitabha
Buddha and awaken to non-birth;
As companions, I will have those Bodhisattvas
who never retrogress.

(This is the end of the book. It is
printed for free distribution for your
references, not for sale.

Reprint is welcomed; limitless merit
can thus be accrued.)

Namo Amitabha