

Introduction To Buddhism Series

Lecture 10 – Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's Ten Vows



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□ A quick review

➤ Topic One : General Introduction

- ➔ Buddhism is an **education**, not a religion or a philosophy.
 - It teaches us how to recover our wisdom and regain our Buddha nature.
 - It teaches us how to solve our problems through wisdom – an art of living.
- ➔ The **law of causality** governs everything in the universe.
- ➔ All sentient beings possess the **same Buddha nature**.
 - Our Buddha nature is temporarily **lost** due to **delusion**.
 - Our lost Buddha nature can be recovered **only** via **cultivation**.
- ➔ Karma refers to an action and its retribution under the law of causality.
 - **Good and bad karmas do not offset each other – prevailing ones occur first.**
 - Karmas, good or bad, accumulate over time and do not disappear.
 - When many bad karmic retributions come together, they form disasters.
- ➔ Cultivation means to stop planting bad seeds and nurturing bad conditions, and to, instead, plant good seeds and nurture good conditions.

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□ A quick review

- ▶ Topic Two : Taking the Three Refuges and Accepting the Four Reliance Principles
 - ➔ We formally accept the Buddha's education and **set our goals** by Taking the Three Refuges.
 - Buddha (Awakening 覺), Dharma (Right or Proper 正), Sangha (Purity & Clarity 淨)
 - The Three Refuges are within ourselves.
 - ➔ We return to and rely on the **Three Refuges within ourselves** and accept the **Four Reliance Principles** provided to us by the Buddha to guide ourselves along the path of **cultivation**.
 - Rely on the Dharma, not on the persons who expound it. (依法不依人)
 - Rely on the meaning of the sutra, not just on the words. (依義不依語)
 - Rely on wisdom, not on perception. (依智不依識)
 - Rely on the sutras that can lead us to break out of delusion, not on the ones which won't. (依了義經不依不了義經)
(Sutras need to fit one's level, or they will not help.)
 - ➔ Four Reliance Principles also help us authenticate a teaching and the person who expounds the teaching.

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic Three : Recognizing the Four Noble Truths

➔ We begin cultivation by recognizing the Four Noble Truths:

- There is suffering in our lives. (苦)
- There is a cause or origin of sufferings. (集)
- There is a cessation of sufferings. (滅)
- There is a path leading to the cessation of sufferings. (道)

➔ Karma (業) refers to an action and its retribution under the law of causality.

➔ Sufferings occur because we are committing innumerable karmas every moment.

➔ Bad karmas are subsumed as **three poisons: greed (貪), anger (瞋), and ignorance (癡).**

- Greed, Anger, and Ignorance are also called the **Mind Karma (意業)** that drives our **Body Karma (身業)** and **Speech Karma (語業).**

➔ **Body Karma, Speech Karma, and Mind Karma** together

- **Seeded** and **are seeding** the causes of all sufferings of the past, present, and future
- **Conditioned** and **are conditioning** all sufferings of the past, present, and future

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

- Topic Three : Recognizing the Four Noble Truths (Cont'd)
 - ➔ Nirvana is the cessation of sufferings. (Nirodha 滅諦)
 - ➔ Nirvana can only be attained via continuous cultivation with diligence and focus, and when we reach Buddhahood.
 - ➔ Realization of the **Noble Eightfold Path** is **the path** to the cessation of sufferings, Nirvana.
 - Topic Four: The Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation
 - ➔ Clearly depicts the function of the law of causality in the death & rebirth cycle – Dependent Arising (Pratitya Samutpada 緣生)
 - **Due to the existence or production of A, B arises or is produced.**
 - ➔ Also explains how to “stop” the chain (Moksha 還滅)
 - **If we don't want B to arise or be produced, we MUST STOP the existence or production of A.**
 - ➔ The Twelve Links are:
 - First Link – Ignorance or Avidya (無明)
 - Second Link – Volitional Action (行)
- (Avidya and Actions are the Causes/Seeds (過去苦因) in the past, from which the present Effects (Dukkha, 現在苦果) arise.)**

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic Four: The Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation

➔ The Twelve Links are: (Cont'd)

- Third Link – Consciousness (識)
- Fourth Link – Name & Form (名色)
- Fifth Link – Six Sense Spheres (六入)
- Sixth Link – Contact (觸)
- Seventh Link – Feeling (受)
- Eighth Link – **Attachment** (愛)
- Ninth Link – **Grasping** (取)
- Tenth Link – **Existence** (有)

Consciousness through Existence are the seeds from which future Dukkha arise. (現在苦因)

- Eleventh Link – Birth (生)
- Twelfth Link – Aging and Death (老死)

Birth, Aging and Death are the future Dukkha (苦) arisen from the seeds of suffering we are presently planting. (未來苦果)

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic Four: The Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation

➔ Attachments (愛), Grasping (取), and Existence (有) are the only ones over which we still have control.

- Breaking out of the Chain from these places are definitely possible.
- It seems the easiest from Existence: stopping depositing anything into our consciousness.

➔ Mahayana's Perspective of Four Noble Truths and Twelve Links (大乘佛法對四聖諦與十二因緣的觀察)

- All dharma are conditionally arisen or existent (緣生).
- The sense of existence (生) of the Four Noble Truths and the Twelve Links in the Chain of Causation is also a false illusion; so is the extinction (滅) of them.
『無無明，亦無無明盡，乃至無老死，亦無老死盡。無苦集滅道，無智亦無得』。(般若波羅密多心經)
- Form and Emptiness do not differ in nature.
『色不異空，空不異色』(是指性相不二)
- Therefore, we should dwell on NEITHER existence NOR non-existence. (不住空亦不住有)

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic Five: Understanding the Noble Eightfold Path

➔ **It is the Fourth Noble Truth:** Realization of the **Noble Eightfold Path** is **the only path** to the cessation of sufferings – Nirvana.

➔ Regardless of Theravada or Mahayana Buddhism, the Noble Eightfold Path is a **must**.

- Right Understanding (正見)
- Right Thought (正思維)
- Right Speech (正語)
- Right Action (正業)
- Right Livelihood (正命)
- Right Effort (正勤)
- Right Mindfulness (正念)
- Right Concentration (正定)

➔ It centered on teaching us to take the middle way (i.e., to avoid the extremes) (中庸之道) and to develop the proper cultivation path.

➔ All in all, live a simple life, i.e., on what we have, not on what we expect to have.

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic Six : Nurturing the Three Virtuous Conditions (Cont'd)

➔ Be **filial** to one's parents; respectfully **attend** one's teachers and all elders; **compassionately refrain** from killing; **cultivate** the Ten Virtuous Deeds (a.k.a. Ten Good Deeds).

『孝養父母；奉事師長；慈心不殺；修十善業』。

➔ Take the **Three Refuges**; uphold the **precepts**; conduct oneself in a **proper and decent** manner; and do not break laws and customs.

『受持三皈；具足眾戒；不犯威儀』。

➔ Give rise to the **Bodhi mind**; deeply believe in the **law of causality**; **recite and uphold** Mahayana sutras, and **encourage** and **help** others to advance on the path to enlightenment.

『發菩提心；深信因果；讀誦大乘；勸進行者』。

➔ Complete realization of all the Three Virtuous Conditions is imperative to the attainment of Buddhahood.

➔ The keys to success are:

- Unwavering belief. (深信)
- Unwavering vow. (切願)
- Continuous practice. (實行)

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

- ▶ Topic Seven : Living the Six Harmonies (六和敬):
 - ➔ The Three Virtuous Conditions are for self-cultivation, or practicing alone.
 - ➔ The Six Harmonies are for Sangha members practicing together.
 - ➔ A Sangha (和合僧團) consists of four or more people practicing together and abiding by the Six Harmonies, and is **comprised of monastic and/or laypeople**.
 - ➔ The Six Harmonies not only apply to Sanghas, but also to all teams or groups of any size, even as large as a country or the world.
 - ➔ Developing common goals (見和同解)
 - Our common goal is to attain enlightenment.
 - ➔ Abiding by the same precepts and rules (戒和同修):
 - Local laws and customs, and group rules are subject to change.
 - The fundamental precepts must be followed.
 - ➔ Living and practicing together (身和同住).
 - Utilizes group momentum to prevent one from backsliding on the cultivation path.
 - ➔ Refraining from arguing (口和無諍):
 - Revert to the Triple Gems whenever disagreements arise.

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic 7 : Living the Six Harmonies (六和敬):

➔ Share the joy from cultivating together (意和同悦).

➔ Share the offerings equally (利和同均):

- Share our good fortune – give generously.
- Effectively use the Four All-embracing Methods/Virtues (四攝法).
- Give unsparingly (佈施).
- Kind words (愛語) – sincerely show our care for others' well being.
- Beneficial actions (利行) – always be mindful of others' interest and reflect on our behavior.
- Comradeship and cooperation (同事) – share the burdens of others.

➤ Topic 8 : Cultivating the Three Learnings (三學)

➔ The Three Learnings outline the procedures along the cultivation path for individuals as well as for groups.

- Precepts (戒)
- Dyana (定)
- Prajna Paramita (慧)

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

- Topic 8 : Cultivating the Three Learnings (三學)
 - ➔ Precepts are preventive measures to help us to control and eradicate our afflictions and ultimately to attain Dhyana.
 - ➔ Precepts include 'do's' and 'don'ts.'
 - ➔ Precepts are for self-discipline, and are not to be used as standards to apply to others.
 - ➔ Dhyana means:
 - To extinguish afflictions from our mind (息慮)
 - To tranquilize our mind from pursuing conditions (靜緣)
 - ➔ Dhyana is only attainable by upholding precepts. (因戒生定)
 - ➔ Prajna Paramita refers to the wisdom that resonates with our Buddha nature.
 - The wisdom arises from the function of Dhyana. (因定發慧)
 - ➔ Prajna Paramita refers to “the ability to free ourselves from confusion and witness the reality of the universe.” (去惑證理)

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

➤ Topic 9: Carrying out the Six Paramitas (六度)

➔ Paramita refers to completeness and **ultimate perfection**, “ferry to the other side.”

➔ The Six Paramitas are to overcome our six categories of obstructions (六蔽)

- Giving generously (布施) ⇔ Greedy and stingy mind (慳貪)
- Upholding precepts (持戒) ⇔ Reckless and bad conducts (毀犯)
- Patience and tolerance (忍辱) ⇔ Anger and resentment (瞋恚)
- Zeal in practice (精進) ⇔ Laziness (懈怠)
- Dhyana (禪定) ⇔ Wandering and confusion (散亂)
- Prajna (般若) ⇔ Ignorance (愚痴)

➔ Giving: (布施)

- Three kinds of giving: material, Dharma, and fearlessness.
- Key is being formless and unconditional in our mind when giving.
- Giving paramita is attained when our greedy and stingy mind are eliminated.

➔ Upholding precepts: (持戒)

- Three categories: Laws and customs (律儀戒), Good conduct (善法戒), and Good for others (益眾戒).

- It's a preventive measure; the merit of upholding precepts is attaining Dhyana.

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

▶ Topic: Carrying out the Six Paramitas (六度) (Cont'd)

→ Patience and Broadmindedness (忍辱)

- Anger (瞋恚) is one of the three poisons.
- To overcome anger one must eliminate it, not just suppress it.
- Transform anger into Dhyana and into wisdom.
- Three categories: tolerate others' insults or harmful actions (忍人害), tolerate Dukkha-Dukkata. (忍世苦), and be patient with Dharma cultivation (忍修法).
- The merit is gradually getting closer to Dhyana.

→ Zeal in Practice (精進)

- Keeps moving forward on the cultivation path and do not be deterred.
- Three focuses: To counteract karmic obstacles (披甲), for all good deeds that are consistent with our Buddha-nature (攝善), For the benefits and well-being of all sentient beings. (利樂有情).
- The merit of diligence is elevating our virtues to different level and not backsliding. (增善、不退轉).

→ Deep Concentration or Dhyana (定)

- Dhyana is the center of Dharma teaching, especially in Mahayana Buddhism.
- The focus is on tranquility of mind. (如如不動)
- Sitting meditation is just for beginners' convenience.

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□ A quick review (Cont'd)

▶ Topics: Carrying out the Six Paramitas (六度) (Cont'd)

→ Deep Concentration or Dhyana (定) (cont'd)

- There are three levels of Dhyana on the cultivation path.
 - » The first level is attained in the Form and Formless realms. (色界、無色界)
 - » The second level is attained at the Arhant level. (阿羅漢)
 - » The third and the utmost level is attained at the Bodhisattva and the Buddha level. (佛、菩薩)
- The merits of Dhyana are:
 - » Our clear and tranquil mind is recovered. (靜慮)
 - » Afflictions are extinguished.
 - » We will no longer pursue conditions, which is the cause of the Dukkha.
 - » We will begin to see and witness our own true nature, Nirvana.

→ Prajna (般若智慧)

- It is the destination of our cultivation.
- It refers to the wisdom which arises from our Buddha-nature.
- The merit of Prajna is the complete enlightenment – Nirvana is witnessed and Buddhahood is attained.

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□ Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's Ten Vows (普賢十願)

- Recorded in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* (華嚴經)
- “If one wants to attain the highest state of merit (that is, Buddhahood), one must **realize** the Ten Great Vows”
『 . . . 若欲成就此功德門，應修十種廣大行願 』
- The Ten Great vows represent the completeness of the merits of a Bodhisattva
 - ➔ Every vow resonates with our Buddha nature and supports the other nine.
 - ➔ They all Dharma teachings to their perfection.
 - ➔ Therefore, Buddha-hood is attained when the Ten Great Vows are fulfilled.
- The realization of each vow extends to and exhausts all time and space dimensions, i.e., all dharma realms (dharmahatu, 盡虛空，遍法界).
 - ➔ To cultivate **broadmindedness**
 - ➔ To cultivate **selflessness**

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□ Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's Ten Vows (普賢十願)

(Cont'd)

▶ Samantabhadra Bodhisattva is the role model for all Bodhisattvas.

→ “. . . All [Bodhisattvas] admiringly follow Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's merits to cultivate . . .” (*Aparimitayur Sutra – Infinite Life Sutra*)

『 . . . 咸共遵修普賢大士之德 . . . 』 (無量壽經).

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□ Pay Highest Homage and Respect to all Buddhas and Buddhas to be (禮敬諸佛)

➤ “. . . For all dharma realms and space dimensions, and **all Buddhas in the ten directions and the three time periods**, . . . , I constantly pay the **highest homage and respect** to them **with my pure deeds**, bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, . . . As the space domain is boundless, so is my homage to the Buddhas without end. . . As the spheres of beings and the klesha of beings are endless, too, so is homage to all being endless. . . **My thought of homage to them continues one after another without interruption**; I constantly cultivate my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.”

『 . . . 所有盡法界、虛空界，十方三世，一切佛刹 . . . 悉以清淨身語意業，常修禮敬 . . . 以虛空界不可盡故，我此禮敬，無有窮盡 . . . 而眾生界乃至煩惱無有盡故，我此禮敬，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭』。

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□ Pay Highest Homage and Respect to all Buddhas and Buddhas to be (禮敬諸佛)

➤ The scopes are:

➔ All Buddhas and Buddhas to be

➔ All beings, sentient and non-sentient

– “All sentient and non-sentient beings have the very same, complete and perfect Buddha and Dharma nature.” (*Avatamsaka Sutra*)

『情與無情，同圓種智』。

– We are all Buddhas to be.

➔ All dharma realms and space dimensions.

➤ A few words on manners and respect

➔ Manners are external and are what others receive.

➔ Homage/respect is internal and comes across our manners.

➔ They must be with sincerity, that is, pure karma (body, speech, and mind).

➤ Realization:

➔ Cultivate the Three Virtuous Conditions, the Six Harmonies, the Three Learnings, the Six Paramitas.

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□ Pay Highest Homage and Respect to all Buddhas and Buddhas to be (禮敬諸佛)

- Cultivate manners and respect by committing to purifying the three karmas, bodily, vocal, and mental.
(悉以清淨身語意業，常修禮敬)
- Be mindful of sincere respect without any interruption.
(念念相續，無有間斷)
- Be diligent in cultivating the pure karmas and without weariness.
(身語意業，無有疲倦)
- Broadmindedness – extends and exhausts all time and space dimensions. (心包太虛，量周沙界)
- Respect is unconditional.
- A few words about “. . . without weariness”
 - ➔ This is the key to the success of our cultivation.
 - ➔ This also reflects our dedication and seriousness.

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□ To Preach the Virtue of and to Praise the Glory of Tathagatas (稱讚如來)

➤ “. . . For all dharma realms and space dimensions, and **all Buddhas in the ten directions and the three time periods**, . . . , I shall apply my profound understanding and temporal knowledge . . . **to preach and glorify the ocean of merits of all Tathagatas**, from now through boundless future without interruption and from here through all dharmahatu . . . **As the space domain and the klesha of all beings are boundless, so is my praise and glorification to them. My thought of praising them continues one after another without interruption**; I constantly cultivate my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.”

『 . . . 所有盡法界、虛空界，十方三世，一切剎土 . . . 我當悉以甚深勝解，現前知見 . . . 稱揚讚歎，一切如來諸功德海。窮未來際，相續不斷；盡於法界，無不周遍 . . . 而虛空界乃至煩惱無有盡故，我此讚歎，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭 』 ○

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❑ To Preach the Virtue of and to Praise the Glory of Tathagatas (稱讚如來)

- The merits of Buddhahood are infinite.
- All sentient beings possess the same Buddha nature and therefore deserve equal respect.
- Glorification must be for the merits. Merits are those which resonate with our Buddha nature.
- **Glorification is conditional as opposed to respect which is unconditional.**
- When seeing others' good deeds, we should glorify and make them known to others. (揚善)
- When seeing others' evils, we shall reflect on ourselves quietly to see if we have the same fault(s). (隱惡)
- **The best glorification to Tathagatas is to realize the Dharma teaching ourselves and spread it to others.**

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❑ Sincerely and Respectfully Make Offerings to all Buddhas and Buddhas to be (廣修供養)

➤ “. . . For all dharma realms and space dimensions, and **all Buddhas in the ten directions and the three time periods**, . . . , I will offer them the most rare and wondrous gifts. . . . Among all gifts, the gifts of Dharma crowns. . . . Why? All Tathagatas value the Dharma the most . . . following this principle to cultivate is the true offering. . . . As the space domain are boundless and the klesha of all beings is endless, so are my offerings to them. **My thought of offerings to them continues one after another without interruption**; I constantly cultivate my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.”

『 . . . 所有盡法界、虛空界，十方三世，一切佛刹 . . . 悉以上妙諸供養具，而為供養。 . . . 諸供養中，法供養最。 . . . 何以故？以諸如來尊重法故； . . . 如是修行，是真供養故。 . . . 而虛空界，乃至煩惱不可盡故，我此供養亦無有盡。 **念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭** 』。

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❑ Sincerely and Respectfully Make Offerings to all Buddhas and Buddhas to be (廣修供養)

- The effects or causal results of giving or offering is good fortune.
 - ➔ Giving is the first of the Six Paramitas, which is Bodhisattvas' cultivation methods.
- Three categories of good fortune:
 - ➔ Tangible – assets
 - ➔ Intangible – conventional wisdom and intelligence, Dharma teaching
 - ➔ Well being and long life
- The ultimate good fortune is attaining Buddhahood.
- What are the distinctions between giving and offering?
 - ➔ Offering is giving with the mind of complete sincerity, purity, equality, and broadmindedness.
 - ➔ The contrast between giving and offering is the broadmindedness.
- Causal results (good fortune) are reflections of the broadmindedness when giving.

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❑ Sincerely and Respectfully Make Offerings to all Buddhas and Buddhas to be (廣修供養)

- Dharma offering is the best of all offerings.
- Follow Dharma teaching and practice (如說修行供養).
 - ➔ This is the most important among all Dharma offerings.
 - ➔ This is also the base for all other Dharma offerings.
- Benefit all beings (利益眾生供養).
- Embrace all beings (攝受眾生供養).
- Take upon oneself the sufferings and burdens of others (代眾生苦供養).
- Diligently foster the root of all merits (勤修善根供養).
- Not swerve from Bodhisattva's vows and doings (不捨菩薩業供養).
- Not depart from Bodhicitta (Bodhi mind) (不離菩提心供養).

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❑ Sincerely Regret and Repent Our Karma and Evil Deeds (懺悔業障)

➤ “. . . For infinite eons in the past without beginning, I, driven by my greed, anger, and ignorance drive my body, speech, and mind conducts, and committed to unquantifiable bad karmas . . . I, by the three pure karmas, . . ., sincerely confess and repent them all, and pledge myself not to repeat any evil deeds hereafter; I will uphold the prohibitive precepts, and cultivate all merits As the space domains are boundless and the klesha of all beings is endless, and so is my repentance. **My thought of repentance continues one after another without interruption** in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.”

『 . . . 我於過去，無始劫中，由貪瞋癡，發身口意，作諸惡業，無量無邊。 . . . 我悉以清淨三業， . . . 誠心懺悔，後不復造；恆住淨戒，一切功德。 . . . 而虛空界乃至眾生煩惱不可盡故，我此懺悔，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭』。

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❑ Sincerely Regret and Repent Our Karma and Evil Deeds (懺悔業障)

- Karma revisited: body, speech, and mind.
- Karmic hindrance (業障) – resulted from evil deeds
 - ➔ Afflictions (煩惱障) – resulted from attachment to self (我執)
 - ➔ Knowledge (所知障) – resulted from attachment to dharma (法執)
- Our karmic obstacles obstruct us from seeing our own Buddha nature and realizing its infinite capacity and wisdom.

“All sentient beings possess the same capacity and wisdom as that of a Buddha. They cannot witness it simply due to their wandering thoughts and attachments”

『 . . . 眾生皆具如來智慧德相，但因妄想執著，而不能證得 . . . 』
- To eradicate afflictions, we must cultivate selflessness.
- To eradicate knowledge obstacles, we must cultivate Dhyana.

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❑ Sincerely Regret and Repent Our Karma and Evil Deeds (懺悔業障)

➤ What does “repent” mean?

➔ True “repentance” is “not repeating it ever,” not only on forms, but also in one’s mind.

– When we truly repent, not only do we never commit the actions again, but also we never give rise to the thought of committing the actions.

➔ “. . . Correct it from forms, from reasoning, and from mind”
(*Liaofan’s Four Lessons*)

『 . . . 從事上改，從理上改，從念上改 』 (了凡四訓)

➤ Samantabhadra Bodhisattva taught us “. . .I, by the three **pure karmas** . . . sincerely confess and repent those evils, and pledge not to repeat them ever,” and “. . . uphold the **prohibitive precepts**, and **cultivate all merits**”

➤ Patriarch Hui-Neng taught us: “Our Bodhi nature is fundamentally pure and clear.” (菩提自性，本自清淨)

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□ Approve of and rejoice at others' meritorious deeds

(隨喜功德)

➤ "...For all dharma realms and space dimensions, and **all Buddhas in the ten directions and the three time periods**,...they have devoted their lives to the sole purpose of diligently acquiring wisdom and diligently accumulating all merits since they began to direct their minds toward Bodhicitta, . . . I thus emulate and rejoice in all such good deeds . . .and all merits regardless of how great or how small they are, I rejoice them all . . . My rejoice over others' meritorious deeds is endless. This mind continues **one after another without interruption in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.**"

『 . . . 所有盡法界、虛空界，十方三世，一切佛刹 . . . 諸佛如來，從初發心，為一切智，勤修福聚 . . . 所有善根，我皆隨喜 . . . 所有功德，乃至一塵，我皆隨喜 . . . 廣大功德，我皆隨喜 . . . 我此隨喜，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭 』 ○

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□ Approve of and rejoice at others' meritorious deeds

(隨喜功德)

- Jealousy is one of the most serious diseases of all beings, even of Dharmakaya Mahasattvas (法身大士).
 - ➔ Otherwise, Samantabhadra Bodhisattva would not have made this VOW.
 - ➔ We have a tendency to impede others' paths to success. Examples are everywhere, at home, at work and even in cultivation groups and Dharma schools.
- Samantabhadra Bodhisattva taught us here how to eradicate the jealousy, which has been deeply rooted within us for an infinite number of eons.
- Confucius also taught us to “help others accomplish good deeds” (成人之美).
- **Actually, we share the same merit as others when helping them to accomplish good deeds.**

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□ Request Buddhas to Turn the Dharma Wheel

(請轉法輪)

- “. . . For all dharma realms and space dimensions, and **all Buddhas in the ten directions and the three time periods**, . . . all Buddhas attain Samyak-Sambodhi, . . ., I, with my bodily, vocal, and mental sincerity and all possible ways to convenient them, constantly ask them to turn the Dharma-cakra. Thus even the space domains end, . . ., my request is endless. **This thought continues one after another without interruption in bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.**”

『 . . . 所有盡法界、虛空界，十方三世，一切佛刹， . . . 一切諸佛，成等正覺。 . . . 而我悉以身口意業，種種方便，殷勤勸請，轉妙法輪。如是虛空界盡， . . . 我常勸請一切諸佛，轉正法輪，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭』。

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□ Request Buddhas to Turn the Dharma Wheel

(請轉法輪)

- Dharma-cakra, a.k.a. Dharma Wheel, refers to Wheel of the Law, (i.e., law of causality).
- Wheel represents perfection and emptiness.
 - ➔ Neither empty, nor non-empty
 - ➔ Neither existent, nor non-existent
- Turning the Dharma Wheel indicates spreading the Dharma teaching to benefit all beings.
- Turning the wheel also indicates moving the Dharma teaching forward without stopping.
- Today, asking Buddhas to turn the Dharma Wheel really means to ask those who know the Dharma and are capable of teaching it to teach and spread the education.
- Individuals in the above category should make vows to teach.

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□ Request Buddha to Stay with Living Beings' World

(請佛住世)

- “. . . Throughout all dharma realms and space dimensions, and Buddhas in the three periods, . . . All Buddhas who set their minds to attain Nirvana, or those Bodhisattvas, Sravakas, Pratyeka-buddhas, Saiksa, Asaiksa, and those who are knowledgeable in the Dharma, I sincerely entreat them to stay in touch with living beings instead of entering Nirvana; . . . Thus, even all space domains . . . have ended, my sincere request to the Buddhas to stay with us never ends. **This thought continues one after another without interruption in my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds without weariness.**”

『 . . . 所有盡法界、虛空界，十方三世，一切佛刹， . . . 諸佛如來，將欲示現般涅槃者；及諸菩薩、聲聞、緣覺、有學、無學，乃至一切諸善知識，我悉勸請莫入涅槃； . . . 如是虛空界盡， . . . 我此勸請，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭 』

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□ Request Buddha to Stay with Living Beings' World

(請佛住世)

- Those sages are the enlightened individuals who are free from all fetters and capable of attaining Nirvana any time.
- The longer they can stay with us, the more sentient beings can receive the right teaching and be benefited.
- The sages will leave us when the need for them ends. That is, when no one requests them to stay.
- Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's vow is to keep these sages with us such that all of us can be ferried to the other side, that is, the enlightened side.
- This vow fully reflects Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's compassion and broadmindedness.
- The way for us to keep those who are knowledgeable in the Dharma and capable of teaching the Dharma to stay with us is to respectfully follow and carry out what they teach us.

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□ Be a Faithful Follower of Buddhas' Teaching

(常隨佛學)

- “. . . For example, in this Saha world, Tathagata Vairocana, since the beginning when he made his earnest vow to attain Buddhahood, has exquisitely cultivated and sacrificed his lives and bodes for **the sake of almsgiving**: he stripped off his own skin for paper, used his own bones for writing-tools, and his own blood for ink; thus, the scriptures have been written in bulk as great as Mount Sumeru. **In appreciateion of the Dharma, he would disregard his own lives and body**, . . ., and all that belonged to him. . .He spoke with the full and round voice of thunder, and with expedient means and skillful methods, to teach the beings in the manners **befitting their inclinations and happiness** . . . I vow to emulate all these examples. . . all Tathagata Buddhas throughout the dharma realms, space and time domains, . . ., I will follow the examples of the Buddhas . . . Even the space domains have ended, . . . my practice of following them never ends. **This thought continues one after another without interruption in my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.**”

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□ Be a Faithful Follower of Buddhas' Teaching

(常隨佛學)

『 . . . 如此娑婆世界，毗盧遮那如來，從初發心，精進不退，以不可說不可說身命，而為布施；剝皮為紙，折骨為筆，刺血為墨，書寫經典，積如須彌。為重法故，不惜身命； . . . 以圓滿音，如大雷震，隨其樂欲，成熟眾生； . . . 如是一切，我皆隨學。 . . . 如是盡法界、虛空界， . . . 一切如來，皆亦如是；於念念中，我皆隨學。 . . . 如是虛空界盡， . . . 我此隨學，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭』。

➤ Good conditions are essential to success in our cultivation.

- ➔ Good cultivation-mates
- ➔ Good teachers and role models
- ➔ Diligence and patience

➤ Buddhas are perfect role models for us.

- ➔ If they are not present, we put into practice the teachings in the sutras.

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□ Be a Faithful Follower of Buddhas' Teaching

(常隨佛學)

- ▶ Buddhas are perfect role models for us.
 - ➔ We must follow the teachings 100%
- ▶ Use a Buddha's conduct as a mirror to reflect on our own conduct:
 - ➔ Is my perseverance like his?
 - ➔ Is my diligence in cultivation like his?
 - ➔ Is my broadmindedness like his?
 - ➔ Is my mind of benefiting others like his?
 - ➔ Is my selflessness like his?
 - ➔ Is there anything I am doing (thoughts, speech, or action) that a Buddha would not do?

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□ In Accord with All Sentient Beings (恆順眾生)

➤ “. . . For living beings in all dharma realms, space domains, and the worlds in all directions and the three times, regardless of their differences in species, forms, appearances, . . . I always **adapt myself to be in accord with them**. I respectfully attend and serve them just **as if they were my parents and teachers**, and my attitude toward them is not different than that toward even arhants and Tathagatas. . . . Bodhisattvas always equally treat and benefit others. Why? If Bodhisattva can serve all beings , that is equal to serving all Tathagatas; holding all beings in high esteem and serving them is equal to serving all Tathagatas dutifully; pleasing all beings is equal to pleasing all Tathagatas. And why? **Great Compassionate Mind is the essence of Buddhahood**. The **Great Compassion arises from all beings, the Great Compassion springs the Bodhicitta, the Bodhi, and as a result, Samyak-sambodhi is attained from Bodhicitta**. . . Without beings there will be no Bodhisattva able to attain Anuttara-samyak-sambodhi . . . Even the space and time domains have ended, . . . my accordance with all sentient beings never ends. **This thought continues one after another without interruption in my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.**”

Presenter: Bert T. Tan / Consultant: Venerable Wu Ling

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□ In Accord with All Sentient Beings (恆順眾生)

『 . . . 盡法界、虛空界，十方剎海，所有眾生，種種差別，
. . . 我皆於彼，隨順而轉；種種承事，種種供養，如敬父母，如
奉師長，及阿羅漢，乃至如來，等無有異。 . . . 菩薩如是平等，
饒益一切眾生。何以故？菩薩若能隨順眾生，則為隨順供養諸佛；
若於眾生尊重承事，則為尊重承事如來；若令眾生歡喜者，則令
一切如來歡喜。何以故？諸佛如來，以大悲心，而為體故。因於眾
生，而起大悲；因於大悲，生菩提心；因菩提心，成等正覺。
. . . 若無眾生，一切菩薩，終不能成無上正覺。 . . . 虛空界
盡， . . . 我此隨順，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意
業，無有疲厭』。

- **Equality** is the essence of Dharmadhatu; differences and distinctions arise from our deluded mind.
- Samantabhadra Bodhisattva teaches us how to completely realize the equality.
 - ➔ Treat others as if they was my parents

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□ In Accord with All Sentient Beings (恆順眾生)

- Samantabhadra Bodhisattva teaches us how to completely realize the equality.
 - ➔ Treat others as if they were Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, or Arhants
 - ➔ Adapt ourselves to be in accord with others.
 - To successfully carry out the Six Paramitas, i.e., grass root the cause
 - As a result, a pure, clear, and tranquil mind is attained, i.e., the result
 - When our mind is pure, clear, and tranquil, we'll always be in accord with others.
- Samantabhadra Bodhisattva also teaches us the sequence of attaining Buddhahood.
 - ➔ Sentient beings trigger compassion; the Bodhi mind arises from compassion; and as a result, Samyak-sambodhi is attained.
- **The major characteristics of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's Ten Great Vows are purity, clarity, equality, sincerity, respect, and broadmindedness. This vow makes his vows stand out from and differ from all others'.**

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□ Dedicate and Transfer All Merits (普皆迴向)

➤ “. . . I dedicate and transfer all merits accumulated from realizing the first vow and up to and including this vow, to the beings in all dharmadhatu and space domains. I pray that peace and happiness is always with them. . . . All sentient beings can be freed from all afflictions, and **ultimately attain Supreme Bodhi**. . . . Even if all time and space domains have ended, . . . my dedication and transfer of merits to them never ends. **This thought continues one after another without interruption, in my bodily, vocal, and mental deeds, without weariness.**”

『 . . . 從初禮拜，乃至隨順，所有功德，悉皆回向，盡法界、虛空界，一切眾生。願令眾生，常得安樂， . . . 令彼眾生，悉得解脫；究竟成就，無上菩提。 . . . 虛空界盡， . . . 我此回向，無有窮盡。念念相續，無有間斷；身語意業，無有疲厭』。

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□ Dedicate and Transfer All Merits (普皆迴向)

- A few words again on merit and good fortune:
 - ➔ Merits are associated with self-cultivation of Precepts, Dhyana, and Prajna Paramita. One will never lose merits to others, neither can they be given or transferred to others.
 - ➔ Good fortune is the result of good karmas and can be transferred.
 - ➔ Good fortune is implied in merits, but merits are not implied in good fortune.
- The dedication and transference of merits is REALLY a training for broadening one's own mind.
- This vow again reflects the broadmindedness and selflessness of Bodhisattvas. Samantabhadra Bodhisattva prayed that:
 - ➔ All sentient beings would be happy all the time and free from all sufferings.
 - ➔ Evil actions would be stopped and no new ones would be committed
 - ➔ All good actions would be successful and new ones would be started

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❑ Dedicate and Transfer All Merits (普皆迴向)

- Samantabhadra Bodhisattva even vowed to take on the sufferings of others that resulted from their bad karma.
 - ➔ Under the law of causality, this is not possible.
 - ➔ This vow reflects true compassion, and does not contradict the law of causality.
 - ➔ I will explain it in the class