

Wondrous Dharma

Wondrous Dharma is the newsletter on the dharma events at the premise of the International Translation Institute, 1777 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010 Telephone (650) 692-5912 E-mail wondrousdharma@gmail.com

Weekly lecture on the Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra:

- Fridays 7:45pm to 8:45pm, starting Feb 19
- At International Translation Institute, Burlingame.
- Lecture is open to the public

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Friday Sutra Lecture commencing February 19

Commencing from the evening of the birthday of Samadhi Light Buddha which falls on Friday February 19, 2010, there will be weekly 'Friday-lecture' on a Sutra at the premise of the International Translation Institute (ITI) 1777 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010. The lecture will be from 7:45pm to 8:45pm every Friday.

This weekly 'Friday-lecture' accords with the exhortation by the Venerable Master Hua when he said, "**We should constantly be thinking about how we can propagate Buddhism and make it flourish.**" (Page 392 of Timely Teachings) Heedful of this exhortation, a disciple of Venerable Master requested for newsletters; hence this first issue.

The first Sutra selected

will be the Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra (*literally Indestructible Wisdom Across the Shore*) or more popularly known as the Diamond Sutra.

The first lecture will explain the significance of the name of Samadhi Light Buddha and how the Vajra Sutra very much explains the name of the Buddha.

If you are willing to translate the lecture into Chinese, please call Jin Ping Shr at 650-6925912

Dharma transmission by the Great Master 5th Patriarch to the 6th

When the Great Master Sixth Patriarch was asked about the Dharma transmission by the Great Master Fifth Patriarch, the Great Master Sixth Patriarch replied: "There was no transmission. We merely discussed seeing the nature." (Page 111 of the Sixth Patriarch's Sutra)

What did the two Great Masters discussed at the time of transmission?

The Sixth Patriarch Sutra

says: The (5th) Patriarch covered them with his precept sash so they could not be seen, and he explained *The Diamond Sutra* for him down to the line, "One should produce a thought that is nowhere supported." At the moment he heard those words, Hui Neng experienced the great enlightenment and he knew that all the ten thousand dharmas (*everything*) are not separate from the self-nature. (Page 84)

The Sixth Patriarch says:

"Good knowing advisors, if you wish to enter the extremely deep Dharma realm and the Prajna samadhi you must cultivate the practice of Prajna. Hold and recite *The Diamond Prajna Sutra* and that way you will see your own nature." (Page 131)

Find out what is the significance of the foregoing paragraphs at the Fridays-lectures.

Footnote: Vajra means 'solid'; prajna means 'wisdom' and paramita connotes 'reaching the other shore'

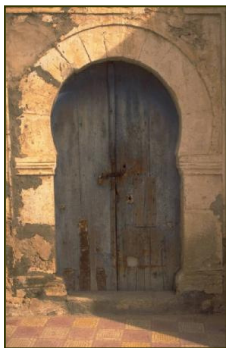


Figure 1 – Understanding Vajra Sutra aids the practices of all Dharma doors.

The Vajra Sutra is important to every Dharma door

Although the Vajra Sutra is an essential text to practitioners of Chan, it is also important to cultivators of the Secret school, the Vinaya (*Precept*) school, the Teaching school, and the Pure Land school. An understanding of the Vajra Sutra aids the practices of the other schools. Find out how the Vajra Sutra can supplement the practices of the other schools.

Someone remarked: “The basic principle of the Vajra Sutra is the principle of emptiness, whereas the Pure Land School is about the existence of a Pure Land.” How then does one claim that the Vajra Sutra can supplement the practice of a Pure Land practitioner? The Friday-lecture will explain it.

Though the Great Master Sixth Patriarch promotes the Sudden Teaching and

recommends upholding the Vajra Sutra, this Sutra is equally relevant to the Gradual School. Find out why it is so.

You get to learn how practitioners of the Tyan Tai and the Hsien Shou Schools will benefit from learning the Vajra Sutra. So do cultivators of the Southern School will also benefit from the Vajra Sutra.

The Shurangama Sutra and the Vajra Sutra

...“the *Shurangama Sutra* is the detailed version of the *Vajra Sutra*.””

The *Shurangama* (*literally-‘durable’*) Sutra is spoken prior to the *Vajra Sutra*. Why is it so?

The Dharma (*Teachings*) at the Great Buddha’s Summit reveals one of the main teachings in the *Shurangama Sutra* because it is the only time during the entire *Shurangama* assembly that the earth quaked in

six ways before the Dharma was spoken. Shakyamuni Buddha also emitted light from the crown of his head and the Buddha repeated the principles in verses to assert the importance of the Dharma at the Great Buddha’s Summit. The principles of the *Vajra Sutra* are contained therein. What are those principles?

The Friday-lectures will

reveal the *Vajra prajna* mentioned in the *Shurangama Sutra*.

Find out more similarities between the *Shurangama Sutra* and the *Vajra Sutra* and the reasons to justify saying that “the *Shurangama Sutra* is the detailed version of the *Vajra Sutra*.”

The benefit of upholding Vajra Sutra is universal...

When the Buddha spoke the Dharma, every living being will receive it according to their potentials. Accordingly, the same applies to college students, professionals, parents and so on when they read the

Vajra Sutra; each person will benefit and improve their daily lives if they understand and practice it.

The lecture series will show its universal benefit providing answers to:

- How will college

students benefit from the *Vajra Sutra*?

- How will teachers gain from upholding the *Vajra Sutra*?
- And so on....

The relevance of Vajra Sutra to householders...

Great Master Chang-jen said: "I am through with household affairs. I have put *everything* down. I pay no attention to such matters whatsoever." It is said:

- Seeing through it
- Break it open
- Give it up
- And winning your freedom. (DFS 1:246)

Because of past causes and present conditions and responsibilities in life, not many can truly 'see through it, put it down and

let it go'; these being the qualities for cultivation to bear fruit. What do we mean by 'seeing through it'?

A person's level of commitment to his Bodhi resolve (*resolve to become a Buddha*) will mirror the extent he upholds the principles in the Vajra Sutra. Because most householders cannot fully put things down immediately, they however, can gradually do so; thereby making progress in cultivation which will benefit future lives. The Fridays-lecture

will offer practical guide and suggestions as to how to uphold the principles of the Vajra Sutra amidst the life of a householder.

Even in this competitive society, householders such as college students, lawyers, professional sportsmen, and so on can still partially adhere to the principle of emptiness yet remain 'competitive'. The Sutra lectures will offer suggestions to guide householders to 'succeed' in today's society and progressively 'put it down, and let it go'.



.... suggestions to guide householders to 'succeed' in today's society, and progressively 'put it down, and let it go'.

Daily ceremonies, meditation and informal discussion

Those interested in participating in the following daily ceremonies are welcome:

Meal offering: 10:30am to 10:45 am.

Great Compassion Repentance: 12:30pm to 1:30pm

Evening ceremony: 6:00pm to 7:00pm

Heart Mantra: 7:00pm to 7:20pm.

Please call before you come over so that

preparations can be made.

Weekly Chan meditation session for beginners

providing basic guidelines/ instructions and practice is tentatively to be held on Saturday afternoons between 4pm to 5pm. The commencement date will be announced during the February 19 Sutra lecture.

Informal mid-week discussion

on Buddhism in general, appropriate for beginners and the 'curious', is tentatively set on Tuesdays 7:30pm to

8:30pm. The commencement date for the informal discussion will be announced during the February 19 Sutra lecture.

Got question and want to ask a Buddhist monastic? You can e-mail to wondrousdharma@gmail.com

"Those interested in participating in the daily ceremonies..... Please call before you come over so that preparations can be made."