

Teaching the Fa at the International Experience-Sharing Conference in Beijing

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I know your feelings, and I miss you, too. But I can tell you this: as long as you diligently cultivate yourself, I am constantly by your side. Many students have done very well in their cultivation—I know that, too. Many students are on the verge of reaching enlightenment.

In the recent period of time, I have been telling many students the following. I have said: it's not easy to obtain this Fa. Perhaps some people felt, "I heard about it, or my friend told me about it, so it was by chance that I saw this book," or "I came upon information about it in the newspaper, I came, and then I embarked on the path of Dafa cultivation." As a matter of fact, you may think it's so simple, and you may think it seems, on the surface, easy to obtain this Fa. That's because rarely does a god or an immortal appear and tell you to obtain a Fa. In most cases, it assumes an ordinary form like these, and you learn about it in a very ordinary way. But I'll tell you, it has been really hard for you to obtain this Fa. Perhaps the hardships you endured in the first part of your life have been for the sake of obtaining this Fa. That's the part you know about. There are still things you don't know about; perhaps you have been suffering and undergoing hardships in your previous lives or for an even longer period of time in order to obtain this Fa. There are also people who have experienced even more intense suffering for the sake of obtaining the Fa, and this is what you don't know about. When you reach Consummation in the future, you will know and see it all. It was not easy at all. You have already come to a pretty clear understanding of this Fa. Why are you able to cultivate this way? It's because you came to know that this Fa is no ordinary Fa. Back in the past in Buddhism, Buddha Shakyamuni validated and enlightened to many things, and he left behind much for humans. However, over the course of people's passing on the things that Buddha Shakyamuni left behind for humans, a lot was lost with time. And moreover, what's documented in the scriptures has been changed or modified by human beings. A single event is thus described in many various ways in the different versions of a given sutra, and this is one of the factors that made what Buddha Shakyamuni taught move toward Dharma's End. Of course, there were other reasons too as for what caused it to head towards the Period of Dharma's End.

Today's society has become quite complicated, so even more so are people unable to cultivate. I would say that the Fa I have been teaching is very large, and our students have probably felt it. Throughout history, no one has ever systematically taught the true principles of the Fa of the universe to human beings, nor told people how to cultivate and how they are to move up through cultivation. Of course, Shakyamuni is a Buddha, so the words he said carried Buddha-nature. But I can tell you, Buddha Shakyamuni didn't in fact tell people the fundamental laws of the universe. That's why Buddha Shakyamuni said in his later years, "I haven't taught any Fa." And in the end he told his disciples to "take the precepts as your master." Why did he say that? It was because Buddha Shakyamuni knew what would happen in the Period of Dharma's End towards the end, and that the law he had taught would be fouled up. He told his disciples, "as long as you cultivate yourselves based on these precepts that I taught, you will be able to meet the criteria for a cultivator and reach Consummation." So, what he truly left behind for humans were the precepts.

Of course, Shakyamuni is a Buddha, so the words he said carried Buddha-nature. So, you can't say that the words he said are not laws. Nonetheless, they are not the most fundamental laws of the universe or the highest truths of heaven. What I have given to you today, on the other hand, are laws that cover everything that starts from the human level and that can be said to go all the way to the highest realm in the universe. However, ordinary humans won't be able to see that on the surface in the book *Zhuan Falun*, because people who don't want to do cultivation consider the matter finished after reading it through once. When they finish reading it once, they think, "This is a book that teaches people how to become a good person." This is invariably the feeling a person has after reading it once. You probably had that feeling too when you just started cultivating. But when you read it for the second time, you will find it's not exactly like that. The questions that arise in your mind after your first read through will all be answered in your second reading. And you will

find that this is no ordinary human book, though you won't necessarily be able to reach any conclusion as to what it is. But when you go on reading it for a third time, you will find that it's a book that truly teaches cultivation. If you are able to read it for a fourth or fifth time, the book will accompany you for the rest of your life—you won't let your hands off it.

Why is it like that? Because, as I said, you can't use ordinary people's principles to guide your cultivation to the realm of Buddhas. This book, however, has profound inner meanings, and you will have different feelings and understandings at different levels about the same sentence. You absolutely won't have the same feeling about an everyday person's books, because [this book] contains a lot of mysteries and wonders. I have never displayed any divine powers for you, and even when I did healings, I did that to conform to the circumstances of *qigong* at the time. Otherwise, I wouldn't have even healed people. If you want to, through cultivation practice, change your body, develop all of the divine powers of the Buddha's Law, keep raising your levels, and gain everything you will have after you achieve Consummation, [then you will find that] I have consolidated all of them in this Fa. As long as you study it, your body will change; as long as you read it, your mind will ascend; and as long as you cultivate yourself, you will achieve different states in different realms. If you manage to keep reading it until the end, then you will reach Consummation under the guidance of this book. That is what this book is all about. Ordinary humans won't be able to see its broad and profound inner meanings, however.

Of course, there's another thing here. All of you sitting here who have obtained the Fa, all of those who are practicing Dafa, know that—and you have felt it in the course of your cultivation—you have all felt and sensed the different connotations at different realms and levels. That is why I said a moment ago that this Fa is no ordinary law; it is the nature of the universe. I have passed onto humans the most fundamental thing in the universe. Of course, what I am doing is huge; I have repeatedly stressed that it is the Dafa (Great Law). Some people may think that I called it “Dafa” because I have taught a lot. Actually it's not like that. What I mean by Dafa has high and deep inner meanings.

Students who are cultivating at very high realms will see something: they will find that humans are not the only ones studying the Fa. Beings at very high realms are studying it too. This Fa is just huge. All of you sitting here have predestined relationships, and that is why you have obtained the Fa. I would like to repeat what I said: it's not that everyone is able to hear this Fa. You are doing your exercises in such a big park, where people are coming and going, and yet some people are simply unable to see it, and some people, even though they come, are unwilling to listen to it, and so they still get nothing. It's not like everyone will get it. Some people find it good once they read the book, while others won't be able to accept it. People are different, but there are reasons behind this. As I said a moment ago, this is not an ordinary human's book. And I have said the following in the United States: why is this Dafa able to guide people up to very high realms of cultivation? It's because of this Fa. Viewed from a very low level, every sentence in it tells a simple truth. But if you are able to see its real situation, you will find that every word in it has the image of a Buddha. If you are able to cultivate to a very high level and your Celestial Eye is able to see high-level things, you will discover a phenomenon: behind each word, numerous Buddhas at different levels are stacked up, in layers. Think about it, everyone: how profound are its inner meanings? Why does one sentence have its variations in different realms and why do the principles of the Fa change in their entirety at different levels? That's exactly the case. So, you should not treat this book as an ordinary human book, and make sure to cherish it.

In the past, people were filled with limitless respect when they mentioned the Buddha, and they talked about Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and Arhats only on magnificent occasions. Today's people, however, toss out the name of a Buddha in an extremely thoughtless and perfunctory manner. This results from humanity's disbelief in the existence of gods having come to this point. Since humans are not supposed to mention Buddhas by name casually, this is a major issue that involves whether or not one shows respect to Buddhas. But nowadays, people casually make jokes about Buddhas and even vilify Buddhas when they eat. Many of the names of their dishes are actually slandering Buddhas. Dish names such as “Arhat Food,” “Buddha Jumping over a Wall,” and the like are cropping up, and they amount to swearing at and slandering the Buddha. Worse, some of these

vegetarian restaurants are owned by lay Buddhists or monks, neither of whom seem to know that they are actually insulting the Buddha. Why are monks and nuns no longer able to cultivate? They no longer know how. They might even think, “What’s wrong with using the term ‘Arhat Food’?” Think about it, everyone. An Arhat doesn’t have attachment to any flavor or taste, and yet the dish “Arhat Food” is rich in both flavor and taste. When you look at it from the perspective of that realm, isn’t that the same as insulting him? The same goes for “Buddha Jumping over a Wall.” The Buddha, it implies, would jump over a wall to get the tasty food of the human world after smelling it. Isn’t that insulting the Buddha? Would a Buddha get attached to human food? I’m merely discussing today’s phenomena. Actually many things are quite disrespectful towards Buddhas. They’ve gone too far! People don’t have righteous thoughts at all when they mention the Buddha, and they even dare to directly insult the Buddha. Some works of literature and the arts likewise maliciously portray the Buddha in a hypocritical light—they have reached this stage. Think about it, everyone. What has become of human society? I’m telling everyone, this book—this Dafa—it is I who is teaching it. I want to rectify anything that’s not right. The Fa contains the Fa principles of Buddhas, Daos, and Gods at numerous levels or realms. So, you should really treasure this book; don’t casually toss it around or place it somewhere. I didn’t point this out in the early days when I taught the Fa, and there were people who sat on it while listening to the Fa. I didn’t blame you, for you didn’t know. Now you have come to a certain level through cultivation and know what the Fa is. So, I am talking about it today so as to tell everyone to pay attention to these matters.

There’s another thing that I will talk to you about in passing. We have a lot of people who have done very well in their cultivation, and they themselves know that they seem to have done quite well. Still, at times some problems flash through their heads, and some things that ordinary people are attached to, such as various emotions, still play in their minds. Some such students are anxious: “How well have I really cultivated?” I can tell everyone that if you are aware that you are a cultivator, and you are holding yourself to the standard for cultivation, then you don’t need to worry when your mind indeed has a state like that. Why do I say this? Because with cultivation in ordinary human society, if all of your human stuff and karma were removed, then I can tell you that you wouldn’t be able to stay here for even one day. You wouldn’t be able to bear the thoughts ordinary humans have in their minds, because every single word, act, and thought of an ordinary human carries a motive, and that motive is usually selfish. That’s why you wouldn’t be able to stand it. If you didn’t have these things, you would see them in others, and you would definitely be unable to bear them whenever you were mixing with ordinary humans. You would feel that human beings’ every word and action carried very strong attachments. You then wouldn’t be able to cultivate among ordinary humans, you couldn’t stay in their presence, and you couldn’t do your job anymore. So I am slowly getting rid of those superficial human things for you, and won’t completely remove them until you are about to reach Consummation.

Then, the few things that haven’t been taken out and that will make a life among ordinary humans possible will enable you to cultivate among ordinary humans. You are already making progress when you realize that these things of yours are bad, and you are actually cultivating yourself if you are able to reject them. But with some of the things, you won’t necessarily be able to get rid of them all at once, because they are things that take a long time to be removed in cultivation. You should be clear about this. On the day of Consummation, all these things will be cleaned out.

Moreover, I’m telling everyone: cultivation is indeed grueling. Since you are practicing among ordinary humans, you will sense this when you are letting go of attachments in the midst of interests and emotions. New disciples won’t feel the resistance so strongly when they haven’t entered this state. Human beings have karma, and the elements caused by karma are obstructing humans’ cultivation. They manifest as challenges at work, feeling unsatisfied with your job, conflicts with others, or bodily discomfort. The troubles usually come abruptly and strongly. Sometimes, even though you know you are doing cultivation, it still seems hard to let go of that attachment. I know that. Eventually, however, you will have to get over it as you cultivate. Willingly or unwillingly, you will have to go through such things, and you will be tempered continually until finally you let it go.

There's another point. I'm telling everyone: those who are listening to the Fa and who have obtained the Fa are probably people who have predestined relationships. The Fa I am teaching you today is indeed of a very high level, and the things I have given you are of a very high level. You are improving very fast in your cultivation, especially those who obtained the Fa later on—they give the impression that they are not only catching up but taking the lead now. I had a feeling when I visited the United States this time: many overseas Chinese—students, Ph.Ds, Masters, senior intellectuals, professors and researchers from mainland China or Taiwan—these disciples are breaking through their levels very fast. Of course, I'm not saying that they are good because they are better educated. It's because of their good inborn qualities. Though they obtained the Fa later, I found that they generally didn't have a slow understanding process after they obtained the Fa. In the past, many people had an understanding process and elevated slowly. Many of these people, however, didn't go through that process; they started cultivating right after they obtained it. They not only understood it quickly, but also melded into it immediately. This is not to say that it's a result of a command of a wealth of human knowledge. Essentially, it's a matter of inborn quality. Then, of course, the factor of predestined relationships is also at work with those who obtain the Fa.

The Fa that I taught has been systematically imparted and almost completely revealed to you. What was supposed to be imparted has been completely given to you, and the things at the highest level are already very high. Then if I were to teach it again or talk about it repeatedly, that would cause interference, for it's not possible that every word of my lectures be the same. Then the things that were imparted might interfere with the Fa that had been fixed for you. So, I can't teach the Fa systematically again. Special circumstances aside, the things I will talk about in the future will relate to some problems human society is facing and some things related to the future, and they are all things related to human beings. The things related to cultivation in this period have almost completely been revealed. The things written in *Zhuan Falun* are already of quite high level. In a later period I taught some other things, and they will be compiled into written form, too. But I'm telling everyone: what can truly guide your cultivation is *Zhuan Falun*. However many more books are published, they are all supplementary to *Zhuan Falun*. So, when you cultivate, you must hold on to the book *Zhuan Falun* for your cultivation.

Our students know very little about the specific concept of "Buddha" and lack an understanding of Buddha. That's because over the years when I imparted the Fa, I seldom talked about Buddhas' circumstances in different realms and the circumstances of Buddhas, Daos, and Gods and the universe in general. The reason I didn't talk about them is that the Fa I imparted is huge, and so nothing specific could be incorporated, nor were such things worthy of being incorporated. That is why many students have little knowledge in this regard, and know very little about Buddhas and sentient beings at various levels from top to bottom. They know very little about Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, or Buddhas' realms and Buddhas' worlds. The fact is, if I told you about Buddhas' lives in detail, you would use human thinking to understand them, and that would be disrespectful of Buddhas. In the future, many of you students will see it and you yourselves will fill that part in.

This universe is quite complex, and it's so complex that, besides humans, even Buddhas, Gods, and Daos are amazed by it. And humans' understanding of the universe is limited to only one layer of its existence. As I said before, of the surface of matter that humans are able to understand, the largest particles are planets and Milky Ways, and the smallest particles include—that is, those that can be known through the use of instruments—molecules, atoms, nuclei, neutrons, electrons, quarks, and neutrinos. What's smaller down the line is unknown. But [what is known] is so very far away from human beings' original matter and from the original matter that forms living beings. Even [what is known] is reduced in size by countless hundreds of millions of times, by countless and countless hundreds of millions of times, but it's still not the ultimate end. So, that's how microscopic matter can be. And yet, the more microscopic the matter is, the larger its volume is as a whole. You can't view one single particle alone. That one particle is only one point of its whole volume, but it is one whole entity. So, the more microscopic the particle of matter is, probably the larger the surface of the whole entity is. When the particles that form the matter are large, the plane formed may not be proportionately large. Humanity only understands the dimension made up of molecules, and yet they are content with what they have achieved and are constrained by various definitions in empirical science, and are unable to break through them. For instance, the air, water,

steel, iron, wood, as well as the human body—everything within the space you live in—are made up of molecules. You are as if living in a sea in the realm of molecules or in a three-dimensional picture made up of molecules. A spaceship, no matter how high it can fly, is unable to go beyond the dimension made up of molecules; a computer, no matter how advanced it is, is no match for the human brain. Of course, it's not that human society has made no breakthroughs at all; it has come to understand molecules, atoms, quarks, and even neutrinos. But what science is able to see is only a point, not entire planes, where particles of various sizes exist. If they were to see such planes, humans would have seen really existing scenes of other dimensions in the universe. And that atom is more than an individual particle that humans see. Even with an individual particle, if it can be enlarged and then seen, if it can be enlarged to the size of a small planet, beings, matter, water, plants, and all forms of material existence on that object made up of atoms can be seen. But humanity cannot make that breakthrough.

Actually, humans live between two particles: the molecules that form everything and planets, the largest particles we can see with our eyes. So [humans] live between molecular particles and planets. Of course, if I don't talk about it today, scientists won't realize it. Humanity hasn't been able to come up with the idea that planets too are particles. And these countless planets form even larger particles, which are various Milky Ways, and in turn, galaxies form an even larger scope of the universe, but that is still not the largest particle. Of course, the concept I'm talking about may have suddenly pushed your thinking to a very high realm. If your body is as large as the body made up of the particles at the level of planets, when you look over at the Earth, does it look like a molecule? Viewed from humans' perspective on matter, planets are indeed a layer of particles. This is talking about it from a macroscopic perspective.

People often talk about going up to heaven, but where is heaven? Where is "up"? In this universe there is no such concept as "up," "down," "left," "right," "front," or "back." Going up can be "up," but is it also "up" when you go down? This universe is round, and the Earth lies almost at the center. Its left-hand side is up, its right-hand side is also up; what's down is up and the top is also up. Then this leads up to a heavenly secret. As I said just now, the smaller the particle, the larger the plane. In fact, when a being is able to enter into a more microscopic level, it is already in a larger, higher place: it is in heaven, because the more microscopic the particle, the higher the level. This is a very vast perspective. The perspective on the universe I just explained is only one way—one perspective on dimensions. There are more complex ones. Of course, you will see them for yourselves when you become enlightened in the future.

Many specifics of heaven are not to be told to humans. As a matter of fact, if man's empirical sciences develop to quite a high level or go beyond the realm of human beings, it will be even more dangerous to humans [than already is]. That's because human beings absolutely cannot reach the Buddha's realm through the means of science and technology. That is absolutely forbidden. Humans have seven emotions and six desires, and they have various attachments, such as competitiveness, jealousy, and lust. If these things were taken to heaven, it would be disastrous, and a fight with Buddhas and Bodhisattvas would erupt. A cosmic war would really break out. Humans will never be allowed to, with their human minds, develop science and technology to the level of a Buddha's realm. Thus man's science and technology are merely developing according to a pre-determined route. If they develop to too high a level, they, along with human beings, will face the risk of being destroyed. That is the scenario I have seen.

Next I will turn to this dimension. The forms of dimensions I discussed just now are an overview of perspectives. Back in his time, Buddha Shakyamuni talked about how to understand the universe of a certain scope, too. For instance, he talked about the specific situations among humans, within the Three Realms, and of a certain scope beyond the Three Realms, such as Mount Sumeru. He also talked about Mount Sumeru's form of existence. Mount Sumeru is surrounded by four major continents and two major layers of heavens. Actually, errors occurred when Buddha Shakyamuni's words were transmitted to China, or when they were translated into Chinese, and during their transmission in India. The "two major layers of heavens" surrounding Mount Sumeru that Buddha Shakyamuni talked about are not at all two major layers of heavens. Instead, they are,

in conceptual terms, two universes—they are to be understood as the small universe and the second layer of universe.

How is the second layer of universe to be understood? The universe that humans understand is made up of a myriad of Milky Ways, and this is its description in terms of the structure of this dimension that humans can understand. This is the universe that we usually talk about. Even with this universe, we humans will never be able to see its boundaries. And then this universe is not the only universe in the cosmic body, nor is it the largest particle in the vast cosmic body. There are a multitude of universes as huge as this one, and they constitute the boundaries of even larger universes. They also have shells, but they merely constitute larger particles. This universe is remarkably huge, and it is inconceivable to humans. Yet for gods, it is no more than a tiny part of one layer of particles. And in the eyes of even larger Buddhas, it is so tiny that it counts for nothing. The ways of thinking, mentalities, and notions are different at various realms.

Just now I mentioned Mount Sumeru, which Buddha Shakyamuni validated and enlightened to, and it is to the north of the Milky Way and solar system we humans live in. But the concept of “north” is hard to describe, as there is no such concept in the universe; the Earth is constantly turning. In the words of Buddha Shakyamuni, we say it is [“in the north”] so that it’s easy for people to understand. Otherwise, if I say it is here, tomorrow it turns and moves over there. Let’s say it is in the north, following what Buddha Shakyamuni said; let’s say it’s in the north. How high is this Mount Sumeru? Mount Sumeru shoots beyond the Milky Way and beyond the boundary of the universe I just discussed, the boundary that myriad galaxies comprise. Think about it, everyone. How big are the numerous, incalculable galaxies? There are certain distances between galaxies. Mount Sumeru extends beyond this universe, and reaches the center area of the second layer of universe; that’s how large of a mountain it is. As a matter of fact, Mount Sumeru is a mountain range joined by three mountains, and corresponding to the three mountains are Buddha Amitābha, Bodhisattva Guanyin, and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta. Buddha Amitabha is the number one Buddha in that realm.

What Buddha Shakyamuni validated and enlightened to far exceeds what people understand about him. Buddha Shakyamuni told many stories in heaven and stories about his previous lives. He did not, however, tell all of his real background. Nobody ever knew what happened to him after his nirvana.

You all know that every Buddha has his own paradise. Buddha Amitabha has the Paradise of Ultimate Bliss. The Lapis Lazuli Paradise is presided over by Medicine Buddha. There are also the Lotus Paradise and the Paradise of Wonders. Jesus and the Heavenly Worthy of Primordial Beginnings have paradises, too. Within the boundary of the Milky Way where humans are, the corresponding dimension has more than 100 such paradises. There are numerous Buddhas, too. As Buddha Shakyamuni said, Buddhas reaching the level of Tathagata are as numerous as grains of sand in Ganges River. Each Tathagata Buddha presides over a paradise, so think about it: how big is this universe? Buddha Shakyamuni was at the sixth layer of the universe, the last level from which he descended. This is a huge number—the sixth layer of the universe, not the sixth layer of heaven. He has a paradise there called the Dafan Paradise. Later, Buddha Shakyamuni came to human society to save people. Following his enlightenment, he transmitted his law for forty-nine years and did not return. This is because based on his power and level, Buddha Shakyamuni could only save the assistant soul, and he couldn’t enable cultivators to cultivate to very high levels in one lifetime.

Now you all know that Buddhas have their paradises. But who has heard that Buddha Shakyamuni has his own paradise? Nobody said so. Buddha Shakyamuni is said to be right at the Saha Paradise, but where is the Saha Paradise? It is in the Three Realms, it is in this Three Realms that includes humans. How come the Buddha’s world is merely here in the human world? No one has ever thought about this. In fact, Buddha Shakyamuni has always been in the Dafan Heaven. Since he comes from Dafan Paradise, he gave that layer of heaven a name and called it the Dafan Heaven. Dafan Heaven is in the highest heaven within the realm of No Lust, and it too is in the Three Realms. Why does he stay there and not leave? Before Dafa started spreading, he had been watching over his Buddhist believers. For the past twenty-five-hundred-plus years, he was actually

waiting for Dafa to start spreading. The final level that Buddha Shakyamuni came from is the Dafan Paradise, but he will not stay there forever. Since he had laid the cultural foundation for the spread of Dafa in this age and endured great hardship among ordinary men, he will return to an even higher realm after he assimilates to Dafa. This is the true situation of Buddha Shakyamuni that I wanted to tell you.

Many people have been asking me, “Teacher, who are you?” As for my story, it is a really, really long one. Going down through layers upon layers of different cosmic bodies and universes, I reincarnated at various levels, and in the human world I split my body and reincarnated; in any given lifetime there were many of me. It is so complex that it’s hard to find where to begin. I can tell everyone simply that, as I see it, I am outside of all cosmic bodies and universes, while all Gods and Buddhas and all living beings are within them.

The universe has to go through the process of formation, stasis, and degeneration, and that is the law for the existence of the universe. The universe is so old. The ages of the Buddhas, Daos, and Gods created in the earlier stages of the process of this universe are so old that they seem to be tired of living. Time is so long that gods may forget the past. They even forget what they were once like. The higher the level the god is at, the slower his time passes and the larger his boundary and volume extends. At even higher realms, the concept of formation, stasis, and degeneration is so drawn-out that a life needn’t even try to think about it—that’s how large it is. Then the master Buddha, who is outside of all times and universes, holds that the myriad beings are the real meaning of the existence of the universe. Since numerous calamities have occurred at different levels, with the exception of the highest realm, no beings know what the most original universe was like. After the new replaced the old, everything in the past no longer existed. But if all beings within the universe are to be kept, the solution to this issue is a difficult one.

When the universe was being born, numerous gods saw the problems that would occur in the last period of the universe. Those gods were worried, and wanted to save themselves. But if they did not possess mighty virtue at that high of a level, they would be unable to reverse it, and they would be unable to return. [Gods] at every level all wanted to do this, so, many gods came here throughout history.

But there was a truth existing in the universe in the past, and that is, no level was allowed to know if there was life at one level above it, and that level above did not know if there was life at one level still higher. Gods at any level knew only that they were the highest, and that is why Jesus in the West said that his father—Jehovah—is the Lord. Jehovah is indeed the Lord who created the Jewish people; he is the creator of the Jewish people. That is to say, he is the highest among Jewish whites and their beings at different levels below. But there are Lords who created other human races in other systems, and furthermore, there are gods and beings at even higher, higher, and higher levels, and only low-level gods and humans are unaware of this. Gods know Buddhist principles at only their own levels. When they saw what the final end would be, all gods wanted to come up with ways to resolve the horrific consequences that would happen in the last phase of the process of formation, stasis, degeneration, and destruction of the universe. So they came down to the world one after another, and many such gods have come. Some gods have suffered all of the hardships in their universe, from start to finish, in hopes that they will thus possess that much mighty virtue and be saved. But they all face the same problem: none of them is the highest, and if problems occur at even higher, higher, and higher levels, their original realms will still be within the calamity. Then the myriad gods who came down would be destroyed, too, and without having achieved anything; the myriad gods who came down were unable to untie this knot, nor could they return. This is what has actually been happening. In saving all beings and in rectifying the Fa at higher and higher levels, I have sent many of them back after they assimilated to the Fa.

Everyone knows that what I have talked about is of a very high level. Buddha Shakyamuni once said that Buddha Maitreya would come in a certain number of years. I came at this time, but I am not at the level of Buddha Maitreya.

I want to tell everyone another heavenly secret at a very high level. I've mentioned it before. With regard to the Buddhas in heaven, such as the Tathagatas and the Bodhisattvas that you know of, there are actually more than one of each of them. They need to be replaced every ten years or less. The current Amitabha is not the earliest one, and neither is Bodhisattva Guanyin the earliest one. Why is that? It's because the human world and the Three Realms are too complicated and because they are so close to the Three Realms. So the bad things down here can directly affect them. Since Buddhas and Bodhisattvas save people, people tend to affect Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. If they save people for too long, they drop down. That's why they need to rotate every ten years or so in this dimension, but a long time will have passed in some worlds. In the specific space of even larger dimensions, time is very fast. With every ten years that pass here, ten thousand years may have passed in some worlds. So in this circumstance, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas cannot stay very long. There is a rule in heaven: at any given level, no matter which god it is, he or she will have to be rotated at a certain point in time; the purpose is to protect them and prevent them from dropping down.

Some past records in the human world also contained such accounts, but humans did not know what it was about. You all know that there is a Bodhisattva Guanyin, right? There were different accounts of her. For instance, there is the South Sea Bodhisattva Guanyin, King Śubhavyūha's daughter who became a Bodhisattva Guanyin through cultivation, the Double-horse child in India who became a Bodhisattva Guanyin through cultivation, and so on and so forth. They are all real; it's only that they are different beings. "Bodhisattva" is the original image of a solemn, magnificent, and greatly merciful enlightened being, and it is the title of unchanging mercy. Each time a Bodhisattva went up through cultivation, she would start to choose a successor on Earth, and help her cultivate the same mercy as hers; [the successor] would reach the same level, have the same mighty virtue, be capable of enduring the same amount of hardship, and have the same power. When that person reached Consummation, she would save her and have her take her place. The same holds true for every Buddha, Dao, and God. This was the most closely guarded heavenly secret in the past, but it has been revealed to you today.

Why did I tell you this? It's because I wanted to make a point. From the time when Buddha Shakyamuni mentioned the name Buddha Maitreya, over two thousand years have passed, and during this period no one has known how many Buddha Maitreyas have come and left! Cloth-Bag Monk was one of them, and that is why Maitreya has been associated with Cloth-Bag Monk. But the image of Buddha Maitreya is not like Cloth-Bag Monk, who, with a big belly, was always laughing—that was merely his image when he was among humans. A Buddha is holy and solemn, and most of them are quite young and attractive, for the higher their level, the more beautiful. The real Buddha Amitabha looks around twenty years old, Bodhisattva Guanyin about seventeen or eighteen years old, and Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta about fifteen or sixteen years old. Since human notions consider a person in his forties steady and reliable—he has reached the stage in life where he is no longer tempted—their images are made like that. But in heaven, a god's thought is determined by his wisdom and level of realm. A god's mercy and wisdom are not determined by his age. Ordinary people always use ordinary people's understandings.

Then, the Buddha Maitreya in this life—that is, when I started spreading the Fa or the last Buddha Maitreya—is actually one that a female turned into through cultivation, but Maitreya has a male image. In fact, the pronunciation for "Maitreya" in the language of ancient India was not very accurate at that time, and became even less so once translated into Mandarin Chinese. It was pronounced "Milai" or "Mile," and it had other pronunciations, too. In the future I will tell you how it is pronounced accurately. When the Buddha Maitreya of this cycle was about to finish his undertaking, that was the time when I started to go public, but I am not at their levels. All gods in the cosmic bodies know that I have come to save sentient beings at all levels with the Buddha Fa and a Buddha's image, and they acknowledge that Maitreya has come, and Buddha Maitreya has imparted to me what he inherited. But none of the gods know where I originally came from. They only know that the person who is to come down to the world to save people has come; meanwhile, they all urged me to [take the form of] residing in a temple [as a monk], but I didn't do it that way. Why didn't I do it that way? Because I wanted to do greater things and had a greater mission. Besides, nowadays people don't believe in Buddhas anymore, and there are far too few monastics

and lay Buddhists. The number of believers who go to temples is too small in comparison with the total number of humans. In the Period of Dharma's End, simply far too many people don't believe in Buddhas. Staying in a temple would not [allow me to] save people on a large scale and enable a large number of people to attain the Fa. And if I stayed in a temple, it would be even less likely for followers of other religions to attain the Fa. I saw this situation, so I chose not to become a monk and instead spread the Fa in ordinary human society.

Of course there is a point here, and it is a point many monks don't understand. People know that what I teach are Buddhas' principles and the Buddha Law. Yet it is not the Dharma that Buddha Shakyamuni taught. As a matter of fact, if it were not me but another person who came to save people, he would not repeat Buddha Shakyamuni's words either. A different person would not teach the things that Buddha Shakyamuni taught. All teach the Buddha Law, but what they teach will be the Fa principles that the Buddhas themselves have enlightened to. Isn't that the case? The biggest confusion that today's monks can't free themselves from is that they believe Buddha Shakyamuni is the only person who taught the Buddha Law and that only what he taught is Buddha Law. They do not know that that is only a small portion of Buddha Law and is the portion that Buddha Shakyamuni had validated and enlightened to. Moreover, Buddha Shakyamuni did not teach all he knew, and he transmitted only the part that he could let humans know. In fact, Buddha Shakyamuni did not teach the Law that the previous six Buddhas taught, either. And moreover, what I am teaching this time is the nature of the entire universe—the essence of all Laws, including the Laws of all Buddhas, Gods, and Daos.

If the Three Realms and humankind play their due roles in Fa-rectification, the humankind of the future will have immeasurable blessings. When I came, everything I wanted was created at a very high level and was born into this world through reincarnation. My mighty virtue is in control from beyond all realms. You can say that I am here, but no one knows how many layers of particles there are separating me from the sentient beings of the Three Realms. I have the most original elements that form the existence of the universe, but I am not within them. I am the source that forms all wisdoms of the universe, yet I want nothing. Sentient beings, on the other hand, are made up of matter from different levels of universes. You may say I am not here, yet I manifest in the human world though I am not in the realm of human beings. This is a short and brief explanation. In the future I will tell people about this when appropriate, but I cannot reveal too much because human beings have already been allowed to know a lot. Some years from now in the future, humankind will nevertheless treat everything happening today as a fairy tale, though.

As everyone knows, what the Chinese government fears the most is that people will set up organizations like The Boxers of the late nineteenth century or rise to oppose the authorities—it is most afraid of losing power. I have repeatedly stressed that we have nothing to do with politics, that we are absolutely not meddling in politics, that we are absolutely not involved in politics. If Li Hongzhi were engaged in politics, what I am spreading today would be an evil practice. You must remember what I just said. In history, however I, Li Hongzhi, have spread this Fa, and however I asked you to do this thing, you should follow it for generations to come and should absolutely ensure that it will not deviate. Later generations should follow the form of cultivation I have left for you. As everyone knows, we have a loose administration, we don't touch money, and we don't have titles and officials. Things get complicated once cultivators touch money. Wealth and fame are the biggest obstacle in people's cultivation.

Of course since you are in human society, you can maintain your way of life. You can go and make money, and you can become an official among ordinary people, and you can do business just like others. None of these will affect your cultivation. This is the cultivation form I have imparted to you. In this form of cultivation, no position is offered, the Buddha Fa cannot be used to make money, and no assistance center may keep money. This is determined by the cultivation form. Such a huge Fa has been imparted to people and it is not meant to be just a three- or five-year sensation. I know that in the future there will be more people who will attain the Fa. There will be quite a lot of people who will attain the Fa—the number is quite large. Moreover, this Fa does not belong to humanity alone, nor does it belong to China alone; the whole world and even more beings are attaining the Fa. This is the Fa of the universe, so everyone should make sure to cherish it.

You didn't know what it was before, and notably, when I started teaching it in the beginning, I taught it as a form of *qigong* practice. That's because people need a process of coming to understand the Fa, so it wouldn't work if I taught the Fa at such a high level all of a sudden. Then I want to tell everyone why *qigong* appeared in today's history. It was paving the way for me to teach this great Fa today. *Qigong* masters did not know why, and even less were those fake *qigong* masters likely to know it, and those fake ones are still messing around in society. Those *qigong* masters who truly played the role of paving the way have basically concluded their missions, and some of them knew that they were asked to stop [teaching] right at this point. If they had not gone out to teach *qigong*, *qigong* would not have spread so widely, and then I would have had a hard time getting people to understand the Fa I taught at such a high level today. That is the reason *qigong* appeared. That is why I say that all those who are still making disorder for the Great Fa will not have a good ending. Actually, they are already in hell; it's only that their life on earth is not up yet.

The transmission of Dafa has gone through trials and tribulations, making for a challenging process. This is a righteous practice and, inevitably, it will encounter interference. That's because when the righteous appears, everything that is not righteous or not righteous enough will be bothered. When something is taught and all goes smoothly it must be aligned with evil, and so they don't have any troubles. Lacking the righteous thoughts and righteous actions that come about through ordeals, there would be no references and mighty virtue for [those practices] to leave to the world's people. Whatever ordeals we encounter in the future, you should understand them correctly.

This universe allows demons to exist. Why are they allowed to exist? I am telling you a principle: mutual generation and mutual inhibition is a principle at the low levels of the universe, especially in the Three Realms. Why does the principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition exist? At the middle level of a certain concept of the universe, there exist two kinds of substances. When the two substances are divided further down, they become two different kinds of substances. That is because the further down, the less beautiful, and the further up, the more beautiful. The difference increases as the substances are divided further down. Then as these two different kinds of matter move towards the lower parts of the universe, the differences between them manifest more, and the differences increase the further they go down. As they go down further, the opposing nature of the two substances manifests. And the further down they go, their opposing nature becomes particularly obvious. Thus the principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition is formed. Further down, the doctrine of *yin* and *yang* in the *taiji* is produced. Further down, especially at the stage of humanity, the principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition is especially noticeable. In the Buddha's realm, what exactly is a Buddha? A Buddha is a defender of the universe. A Tathagata Buddha is the Law King of a paradise. He doesn't govern by resorting to just any means: he uses his mercy and mighty virtue. His sentient beings are all up to the standard of his paradise, and everything is beautiful. In that realm, in regards to the principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition, what opposes a Buddha (the Law King) is a Demon King.

As for the Demon King, everyone knows about Tantric Buddhism, right? I have said repeatedly that Tantrism cannot be spread in human society and it can be practiced only in private. Why is that? Because Tantrism cultivates both righteous enlightened beings and Demon Kings; it cultivates both Buddhas (Law Kings) and Demon Kings. If these things are to be taught out in society, think about it: what consequences would it have for society? That is where the problem lies. That is why I have said all along that Tantrism cannot be spread in society and can be practiced only in monasteries. Those that are being spread in society are all fake and deceptive. When the principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition manifests at the plane of ordinary people, there are both humans and ghosts. They just exist that way, and these mutually-corresponding principles exist simultaneously. But precisely because there is this opposing nature and because there exists a principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition, it brings about a state in ordinary people's society. And this includes the state when I am teaching the Fa today. Namely, there are people who believe it and there are people who don't. Among the world's people, there are good ones and there are bad ones; there are selfless persons and there are selfish ones; there are broadminded people and there are narrow-minded ones. The positive and negative co-exist, and that is the corresponding relationship. All these manifestations constitute the state of human society.

The same goes for anything in human society. If you want to achieve something good, you won't accomplish it until you have broken through proportionately large challenges or interference, and that is the constraint brought about by the principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition. Precisely because of the existence of this principle and the demonic interference, it won't be easy for you to get something done. You need to make an effort to accomplish your work. You will get it done after you have put in effort and labored at it and overcome many difficulties. Only then will you cherish it and be happy. Something is precious when it is hard to gain, and only then will you have the joy that comes with triumph. If there were no principle of mutual generation and mutual inhibition and no interference from demons, if you could accomplish whatever you do easily, and if there were no demonic nature, you wouldn't cherish what you get, you wouldn't feel that it is precious, and you wouldn't have joy after triumph. Think about it, everyone: you would feel like life is boring and meaningless. When everything can be done easily, nothing is meaningful. People would feel that life is meaningless and bland. So, you may think hardship is undesirable, but it plays this role.

Why do people ask me: "Teacher, why don't you clean out all the demons?" If I cleaned out all the demons, you could no longer cultivate today. No one would test you to see whether you will ultimately stay committed towards this Fa; without interference from demons, you couldn't get rid of certain attachments; and without interference from demons, you couldn't eliminate karma. This is the truth. Humans, objects, and living beings all have these two features. Humans are formed by both Buddha-nature and demon-nature. When you are cultivating yourself with Buddhist principles, you are actually getting rid of your demon-nature. When humans slack off and are not bound by moral values, that is when demon-nature is in full swing. When humans get agitated, shout hysterically, and lose their tempers, their demon-nature is in full display. Now, tens of thousands of demons are coming out; they exist in all arenas in society, driving people to vent their demon-nature. In the works of fine art, performing art, and literature, willful expressions without righteous thoughts—as if in a mad state—are no different from ghosts and demons. Men, sporting long hair with weird styles, look half-man and half-woman, and that is said to be the look of an artist or musician. As a matter of fact, these are all perverted mentalities driven by demon-nature.

Only those who are bound by moral values are displaying Buddha-nature. What is cultivating Buddhahood? It is to get rid of your demon-nature and assimilate to Buddha-nature. What I just talked about is of a very high level and is very specific. That's all I will say today. (*Long, enthusiastic applause*)