

Falun Buddha Fa

Teaching the Fa at the Conference in Singapore

(August 22 & 23, 1998)

Li Hongzhi

Hello students! (*Applause. "Hello Master!"*)

I know that in the audience there are our Singaporean students, along with many people who've traveled a long way from China, from other countries, and from many different regions. The aim of this Fa-conference is to help you raise your levels as quickly as possible by sharing experiences with each other and by finding where you fall short. That's the general objective. Yet many students want to see me because they have, by cultivating for a long time, gained an ever-deepening comprehension of the Fa,* they've come to understand much through their own experiences, and personally sensed more and more different aspects of cultivation. Many of you didn't attend the seminars that I gave in China back in the early days, and many of you have learned and practiced on your own, so you're really eager to see me. I do know how you feel. So that's why you've come. There are still many others who share that thought and who wanted to come. I understand your feelings very well, but I think that it was back in the early years when I personally taught the Fa that talks on the Fa were most important.

Now that the Fa has been brought to the public and the books are widely circulated in society, our students have the books. That is, all of you can study the Fa and cultivate, and the effect is the same as the seminars I gave in person and taught the Fa at in those years—nothing is left out. So what's most important now is having a stable environment that will help you improve yourselves in cultivation as quickly as possible. Through studying the Fa and cultivating, you've realized and come to know that your Master is truly taking care of you and being responsible for you. Your improvement, then, is systematically arranged—everyone has a systematic path of cultivation. Your desire to see me might cause your thoughts to begin drifting and render you unable to cultivate with a calm mind, or it might cause you to go all over the place looking for me. That would affect your cultivation process. The Fa has been introduced to the public. But has it occurred to you that your improvement and your cultivation are what's most important? If you can't improve yourselves, or if you can't cultivate, then my teaching the Fa amounts to nothing.

Nothing should interfere with your cultivation, for it is the top priority. I simply want to tell you that during your cultivation you must calm your heart and mind and not let yourself be affected by ordinary human attachments.¹ If you've [come here] truly for cultivation, raising your realm, and identifying your shortcomings, or if you've come here to see how Singaporean students are doing in their cultivation and to listen to their experiences and insights so as to foster your own improvement—if that's what is on your mind—then I'm delighted. Of course, wanting to see Master isn't wrong. It's just that you shouldn't have strong human emotions. Anyhow, your ordinary human attachments need to be discarded. If they aren't, you'll regard me with ordinary human emotions and an ordinary human mind, and you'll regard the Fa with ordinary human thoughts. That would create a serious obstacle to your improvement. We should be careful with this.

Coming here wasn't easy for many of you. Some people are probably quite busy at work but have managed to take time off and rush to Singapore expressly for this. And people have all kinds of circumstances. Since you're here now, I think you should calm down and listen to how Singaporean students are cultivating and improving themselves. Students who've come from overseas can treat this trip as a journey of learning.

I came to attend this conference to listen to you. Yet we do still have lots of students who are unclear on quite a few things. Since Dafa* is spreading throughout the world, there are bound to be new students and disciples constantly taking up the practice, and they'll certainly have all sorts of questions. Actually, you can find in the book the answers to all of your questions. But some of our students still can't rest assured and always want to ask me questions. So I'm giving you an opportunity for that. This is a two-day conference. I won't speak too much now and will mainly listen to you. Wait until tomorrow afternoon, and then I'll spend the whole afternoon answering your questions. You can ask more questions at that time about your cultivation, and I'll answer

¹ Translator's note: The Chinese term here, *xin*, could also be translated as "thoughts," "feelings," "heart," "mind," or "intentions."

them for you. I think half a day will be sufficient. There are only two days in total, and our students need to organize the speeches, and there are other activities as well. We should try to make this Fa-conference a complete success. This is the first time Singapore has held a conference of this magnitude, and so many people have come from overseas. Some aspects of the preparation are by no means easy. You all know what to do and will handle things well without me telling you much.

Now I'll talk to you about the overall situation of our Dafa at present. When I taught the Fa in China, the country was in the period of reform and opening up. I had a feeling: People's thinking was changing with the economic development, so I introduced it at that time. Since many people had formed certain notions over a long period of time, they needed a transitional process to understand [the Fa]. It took them some time studying the Fa before they realized what I was imparting. Later on, and more so recently, I found that new students seem to surpass old students when it comes to obtaining the Fa. In other words, they don't have the obstacle of understanding it perceptually. They embrace it right away and immediately throw themselves into it without needing a transitional process to understand it—"Am I able to learn this?" "Do I want to learn this?" They have none of that, nor "Are the principles you talk about right?" In other words, although these students obtained the Fa later on, I've found that they haven't been left behind. Through their own efforts they'll catch up soon.

I think the overall situation of Dafa is that students' comprehension of the Fa is ever deepening, that their understanding of the Fa has become more profound, and that they truly know what this Fa is about. It's a huge change from the early days when people regarded the Fa with human feelings and human ways of thinking. This has really been a huge change. It's totally different from the early days. So in other words, you're truly cultivating in the Fa, and not regarding or assessing the Fa with emotions, deep gratitude, or various human notions—those things are becoming less and less. It means that our Fa is becoming increasingly purer in ordinary human society.

So what does it mean to "fulfill² the Fa"? Many of our cultivators might not know. Since this Fa is so great—it can save us, it can allow us to reach different levels and realms through cultivating, and can lead us to Consummation—why does it need people to fulfill it? As a matter of fact, you might have thought about something: Ordinary human society, too, is a manifestation of the boundless Dafa of the cosmos at this lowest level, that of ordinary humans. Every form manifest in ordinary human society, too, is given and created by this Fa. So we are, as cultivators, using this environment to do cultivation. Although ordinary human society is bad when viewed from different levels, it too is a level and realm created by the Fa. Then, if in your cultivation you're clear on how to break out of this level and how to free yourself from the various behaviors and notions of ordinary human society, you can break through those barriers and rise to a higher level. That's what you have to achieve in cultivation.

If you can't let go of ordinary human things, though, your cultivation might be seriously hindered. The corruption of moral standards and the decline of humankind's moral values have altered everything that the Fa created for living beings at this level. So it's really hard for people to know that Truth still exists as a standard in everyday people's society. Without that standard, people dare to do anything, they dare to do whatever, and they fear nothing. That in turn brings about the degeneration of society's morals and values, which manifests as the many unhealthy phenomena and crimes in everyday people's society.

To fulfill the Fa, you must first of all be a good person. When you're being a good person, *that* is an act of fulfilling the Fa. But since you're cultivating among everyday people, after all, you need to go still higher than all of these things. So when you can truly understand the Fa, cultivate in the Fa, and be an upright and true cultivator, you are fulfilling the Fa. Which means, you are safeguarding the Fa as well. That's because the conduct of each student in everyday people's society represents Falun Dafa [in people's minds]. Isn't that right? If we don't conduct ourselves well, we'll undoubtedly tarnish Dafa's image, and it couldn't be said that we're fulfilling the Fa. Some people have said that we need to safeguard and protect the Fa, and that when other people say something bad about us we should deal with it in such-and-such way. In particular, when some people slander our Dafa or treat us unjustly, many of you often get angry and want to take some measures to retaliate. [You think,] "They treat us badly, so we'll do the same to them." In that case, we're confusing ourselves with everyday people and are no different from them.

Actually, let me tell you this: Safeguarding the Fa doesn't mean resorting to violence. Good and evil coexist within a person. We dispel the evil side and use only the good side to safeguard the Fa.

² Translator's note: The Chinese term here, *yuanrong*, has been translated as "harmonize" in some other lectures.

When others say something bad about us, we can let them know how good we are, and we can reason with them entirely using the good side. Oftentimes when an everyday person encounters a problem, he tends to adopt a negative approach. So he'll take some extreme actions or resort to violence. None of that is appropriate for us to do. I often say that if a person is free of any personal notions, isn't motivated by self-interest, and is truly looking to benefit others, then when he points out another person's shortcoming or tells the other person what's right, that person will be moved to tears.

*Shan** is really powerful. It's only that when a person in everyday people's society tells someone about a good thing, he usually attaches his own notions, and even worries it might harm him in some way, and he wants to protect himself. Many things are mixed into what he says, so it doesn't sound quite right and is impure, and often even has emotion in it. If what you say truly comes from your kindness and is without any personal agenda, your words will really touch others.

What I'm talking about here is how we're to fulfill the Fa in this everyday people's society and how we can prevent the Fa from being undermined. Many of us have explained our motivation to various types of departments of the government in our society. I think that's good. If they really listen, there's a good chance they'll join the ranks of the good people. It's only worrisome if they don't listen. If they really want to understand our Fa, as long as they read the book, learn the Fa, and really try to understand it, they will know what we're about. Usually the people who say bad things about us are those who haven't tried to understand us and don't understand us. Everything about us is open—we have nothing to hide from people. The path we've taken is extremely upright. I've often said that exactly because the path we've taken is extremely upright, everything that isn't upright, that's not upright enough, or less than perfect in everyday people's society, will consider us an obstacle. Because we're so good, perhaps the inadequacies of some things will be exposed, and then they will do some negative things to us. That's inevitable. If nobody opposes something upright when it's imparted to the public, then I would say there's a good chance it's wicked. (*Applause*)

Seen in another light, as our Fa is spread in everyday people's society, when we encounter irresponsible attacks from people and certain [governmental] departments that don't know what we're about, or when they label us arbitrarily or treat us in a really unreasonable way, I think we should also examine ourselves on these issues by asking: "Why do these things happen? Is it because we ourselves, our assistance centers, our practice sites, or some of our students, aren't conducting ourselves properly?" If you can examine yourselves with every thing you come across, then I'd say you are really remarkable, and nothing can block you on your path to Consummation. Yet when we run into problems, we often look outwards—"Why are you treating me like that?"—and feel that we've been treated unfairly, instead of examining ourselves. That's the greatest and most fatal obstacle for all living beings. In the past, some people said that it was impossible to succeed in cultivation. How could one succeed in cultivation? [They couldn't succeed] because that was the biggest obstacle, and nobody was willing to find faults in himself amidst problems. When a person feels hurt, or when he encounters misfortune, it's really difficult for him to still examine himself and see if he's done something wrong. If a person can do that, then I'd say that on this path, on this path of cultivation, and for the eternity of his existence, nothing can stop him. It's truly the case. Sometimes we still fail tests even though deep down inside we're aware. But after all, since we have the ability to think, and with the principles before us, deep down we know what's right and what's wrong. We may fail once or twice, but we'll do well afterwards. The key lies in how you understand yourself, and whether you can correctly examine yourself and find within yourself the cause of the problem.

Before, when many of our students ran into conflicts with people outside our circle, or when people or certain departments of various functions in society treated us unfairly, we didn't examine ourselves to find the cause, and instead stressed what was wrong with others. Certain things have indeed been really bad, and they were wantonly trying to harm us. But has it occurred to you that although they were bad and demonic acts, could those things have happened just by chance? Could it be that their negative aspects were utilized to have us see our own negative aspects? I've often said that when two people have friction between each other, each one should examine him or herself. Not only should the two people with the friction examine themselves, but also the bystanders who happen to observe the incident should. That's when you'll really improve by leaps and bounds.

You know that our existences are made up of submicroscopic³ matter from different levels. Some of the matter is considerably submicroscopic. You are, in our cultivation practice, being transformed at an extremely submicroscopic state of being, namely, from the origin of your existence. The transformation continually expands outwards—continually expands towards your surface layer. Once transformation has been completed all the way to the surface, you have reached Consummation. That’s the approach we take. So before you arrive at the stage where your surface layer can be assimilated by the Fa, you will, in different ways, still have everyday people’s conduct, thoughts, and ways of doing things, to be sure.

Some of our students have come and asked me: “Teacher, I’ve been cultivating for so long now, and I feel that my understanding of the Fa is sometimes no longer like that of the average new student. So why is it that bad thoughts still appear in my mind?” It’s a question everyone here in the audience has thought about. Let me tell you: In the course of your cultivation, you are transformed from the very origin of your existence. Ordinary people’s thoughts will always be there until the transformation reaches your outermost layer. What are the pros and cons? The pro is, you can keep this cultivation environment here among everyday people, and this allows you to continuously and more quickly improve yourself. What’s the con? It’s that you can never tell which realm you are at. During certain periods of time when you’re doing well in cultivation, or understanding the Fa well, and able to recite the book—that is, when you’ve reached the standard for that particular realm—[that part of you] is immediately separated from the part of you that hasn’t been fully cultivated. You’ll suddenly wonder: “Why is my understanding of the Fa no longer as good? Why have my thoughts become bad again?” You’ll have that feeling.

You cultivate among everyday people. The part of you that’s fully cultivated is a noble, righteous, godly part. Accordingly, in the society of everyday people, a god can’t have the same behavior as an ordinary person, that’s absolutely prohibited. The moment he behaved that way he would fall. To ensure that you can cultivate in ordinary human society and not fall, as soon as a part of you meets the standard, it is separated. The part that’s fully cultivated will always sit still over there, motionless and free of any thoughts. It doesn’t get involved in any human activities, and this ensures that you won’t fall. As you keep cultivating, you will only keep improving. Here I’ve told you about another principle, namely, that you constantly transform yourself in cultivation, starting from submicroscopic levels, and gradually move towards your surface layer. When your surface layer is completely assimilated you achieve Consummation.

Then, before we Consummate, we’ll always have ordinary human thoughts and behavior during the course of our cultivation. What’s more, you’ll find that sometimes your thoughts seem to become worse and worse. Why is that? Many bad things have roots and exist not only in the layer of the largest particles, but also in particles of various sizes. So think about it, everyone: During the course of your cultivation, as [your transformation] keeps breaking through towards the surface, bad things in your submicroscopic particles keep getting eliminated. What’s left, then, will be what’s at the outermost layer, and what’s at the outermost layer is the worst. Yet the worst is also the weakest. In other words, as long as you can exercise self-control as you cultivate, you can easily suppress those bad things and get rid of them, including all the notions in your mind.

You probably understand the principle I just discussed: “Oh, so that’s why people might have bad thoughts the whole time they cultivate. From now on I won’t worry about them, I’m not afraid of them anymore. I’ll just let them go however they want to.” That’s unacceptable! Since you’re a cultivator, if you don’t exercise self-control at the surface level, it’s the same as not cultivating. That’s how these things are related. I just spoke about the state of our students’ cultivation as a whole, and I addressed some topics along the way.

There’s another thing. Our Dafa is spread in the society of everyday people. Why do we do it the way we do? As you know, we have a very loose form of administration. We don’t have any rosters that list a John Smith or Jane Doe, or who you are, how old you are, or where you live. We don’t do any of that. I’ll look after you provided you cultivate. Because cultivation things don’t manifest in this dimension of ordinary human society, the forms of things that appear on the surface are only forms, and useless. If you don’t cultivate, taking down your name only amounts to a number game—it’s not cultivation. We’ve thus completely abandoned all formalities of everyday people.

We only look at people’s hearts and minds. As long as you cultivate, I will look after you. As long as you cultivate, you’re our student. While you practice our Assistants organize everybody to

³ Translator’s note: The Chinese term here, *weiguan*, has been translated as “microcosmic” in some other lectures.

study the Fa, that's all. We don't have an administrative organization like those in the society of everyday people, and we don't keep money or property. Everyone paid their own way to the conference. I, Li Hongzhi, will not take one cent from you. Any work we do, we do it voluntarily, and to benefit others. Everything of ours is loosely administered.

Why do I do it this way? Actually, I can tell you: The Fa I'm imparting today is immense—it can allow you all to reach different realms and levels through cultivation. This is by no means a small thing. A Fa this enormous has been introduced to the public, but if it couldn't change people or couldn't make people's morality elevate again, then it wouldn't matter whether it was taught or not. I know that since this Fa is the Truth and the Law of the cosmos, it will definitely have a tremendous impact on cultivators. So, every one of us knows what to do, and there's no need for me to tell you specifically how to conduct yourselves.

Back in the days when Buddha Sakyamuni was teaching his Dharma* there were over a hundred precepts. It's said that Mahayana Buddhism now has over two hundred precepts. The purpose [of precepts] is to restrict you, and make you meet the standard and act accordingly. We don't have any precepts today—we're completely open. We don't pay attention to any form, and instead we only look at people's hearts and minds. That's because our Fa has such mighty power. Also, from another perspective, no form manifest in ordinary human society is worthy of this Dafa. That's why we have truly adopted a way suitable for spreading Dafa. What way is it? It is a "great way without form." (*Applause*) We really have taken a "great way without form," and only that truly fits our Dafa. So that's how we have gone about things since I taught the Fa in the early days.

The only thing somebody can see is that people are reading the books and that they do exercises together. But even those are completely voluntary and loose. If you want to come, you're welcome. If you don't want to come, you can do as you please. I think this approach is quite good, as nothing with a form or shape can change a person's heart. If a person doesn't want to learn and yet you drag him along, not only won't he be able to learn or understand, but he'll also make irresponsible remarks and play a damaging role from within. We're extremely upright, so all crooked things might find us a thorn in their side, since all of their deficiencies and weaknesses are exposed.

Before, there were all sorts of *qigong** in the society of everyday people, especially in China. I think that since the introduction of our Dafa to the public, especially in the last few years, many fake *qigong* practices have disappeared. Why? Because once our righteous Fa was introduced to the public, the crooked, wicked, and the fake were all exposed under the sun (*Applause*) and naturally, they disappeared. Many people who used to practice other *qigong* forms have come to learn Dafa, one after another. We haven't dragged them over. Those people came to learn because they recognized the Fa and could tell that it was good and an upright path.

Have you thought about this from another perspective? Since a righteous Fa has been imparted to enable people to cultivate to various levels, this involves a question: With which Fa will you cultivate to get up there? This is critical. If this Fa weren't upright, naturally you couldn't go up by cultivating; if this Fa didn't have such mighty virtue, that is, if it weren't so immense, you couldn't reach that high a level cultivating; if this Fa weren't so grand, or weren't so good, letting you go to a level that high would equate to messing up the entire cosmos. And even if you were to get up there, you'd feel inadequate staying there, you'd see the Great Enlightened Beings up there, with mighty virtue beyond description, and you'd wonder how you'd gotten up there and would step down yourself, feeling unworthy of staying there. So as our Dafa encounters ordeals in ordinary human society, we're using the ordeals to fulfill our Fa and establish our Fa's mighty virtue. Regardless of the forms that manifest to oppose Dafa in ordinary human society, we haven't responded to them in kind: We have always used our good (*shan*) side, and have handled everything well in every respect. We have endured lots and lots of different tests for the Fa. So hasn't our Fa established its mighty virtue? The more upright the course it has taken, the greater this Fa is, and since you're cultivating in this Fa, the more remarkable you are. Isn't that how these things work? Yes, it is. So whenever we encounter a problem, we must look at both its positive and negative side, and look for the causes inside, within ourselves. With everything we come across, we should look inside for the reasons and for our shortcomings.

I've often talked about a principle. When some people run into trouble, being in the middle of trouble, they say: "Why do they treat me like this? Why aren't things going well anymore?" Let me tell you: Actually, it's not that others are treating you wrongly. The laws of the cosmos are in good order. If something is wrong on your part, you'll find that everything around you goes against you.

Once you find the cause inside yourself and rectify it, you will find that everything goes smoothly again. That's usually the case.

Another facet of things is that because we've overcome many problems and shortcomings, and because our Fa has developed in an ever more positive way, the situation can only get better. At present, there's now quite a large number of people studying the Fa. There are now about 100 million students in China and abroad. That's a whole lot of people. Also, our Dafa disciples have an outstanding quality: Once they start to cultivate and understand the Truth, they'll cultivate all the way to the end. That attribute is extremely precious in cultivation. This [Dafa] is different from every doctrine and every type of cultivation practice throughout history. With so many people studying it and so many people cultivating, this has become a reality in society that has to be acknowledged. With so many people striving to be good, and with our not having any bad things, I think the situation can only get better.

Falun Gong used to be a branch of the China Qigong Science Research Society. We discovered, however, that the Qigong Science Research Society didn't conduct any scientific research, nor did it study *qigong* practices or try to understand *qigong* itself. It was only making money; it used *qigong* practices to make money. So in March of 1996 we withdrew from it. (*Applause*) They attacked us after our withdrawal, but we paid no attention to their attacks and ignored them. Let's not get into that now. What I'm saying is that we should take our own path, a path for true cultivators. We have to be responsible both to society and our cultivating disciples.

Here's what I think: We have such a huge number of people—so many people—and they're all good people who benefit society. We—including me, Li Hongzhi—don't have any desire to gain something for ourselves. I chose to live overseas so as not to cause problems for the government. (*Applause*) I think that with so many people cultivating and trying to be good persons, nobody should push these 100 million people to the opposite side of the government—that I can tell you. But there's one point: No matter what we do, we must walk righteously on our own path. I didn't intend to speak a lot. I only wanted to talk to you about the situation of Dafa, about how we cultivate, and about our understanding of the Fa in the course of cultivation, and along the way discuss things related to cultivation.

I'd like to take this opportunity to address another thing, then: Many people take photographs without considering the occasion. Let me address the matter of photo taking. Rarely could you see me before, so you've always wanted to take a photograph of me or with me, your teacher. If your intention is truly based on cultivation, I don't have any objections. But if it's born of an ordinary human intention, then I'm really sad! Also, many of you disregard the situation and location when taking photographs, and have taken many photographs with bad images. That's not good for any of us. As you are my disciples, how could you take those photos of your master? After this conference you can go tell the students in other regions to burn all those poorly-taken photographs, (*Applause*) including their negatives. I'll give you a chance to take photos, if you really want to. (*Applause*) That's all I'll say for now. I will answer your questions tomorrow afternoon.

Don't write too much on the question slips you pass up, as that makes it a bit of work to read them and it takes up a lot of time. You don't need to make opening remarks such as "Teacher, I missed you so much" or "Teacher, what you said was so great... Here's my question." Don't preface your remarks. Just say, "Master, these are my questions" and describe the situation. Then I'll answer them for you. Make the questions simple and easy for me to read so that we don't waste time and so that I can go through the questions efficiently. All right, now I'll listen to our students' speeches with you. (*Applause*)

I'll answer your questions this afternoon. Those who have questions may pass your slips up. All right, now I'll start to answer your questions.

Question: Can we pass around in China video and audio recordings of the conference and the speech on Fa?

Teacher: In principle it's not a problem. But you people always want to pass things around, and it's an attachment you should break. You need to cultivate in an upright and noble manner. Why do you have so much zeal and so many attachments? Can they help you achieve Consummation? You may watch the tapes on your own, but don't duplicate them.

Question: In the scripture,⁴ “Dig Out the Roots,” you said, “when I ask you to break away from humanness, you don’t follow me. Each opportunity will not occur again.” If someone loses the opportunity, will it affect his level of attainment?

Teacher: Many aspects of things are involved when you face a serious test; it doesn’t just assume that one form. Such a thing is the biggest, fundamental test for our students. Whether or not you can break away from humanness is a critical step in determining whether or not you can reach Consummation—it’s a step you must take. Our students will come across all kinds of tests. Will you fail to Consummate because you missed the opportunity? There might be another chance, but I think another opportunity is really hard to come by since an opportunity of this sort is only possible when a combination of multiple factors is in place. In other words, what I mean is that no matter how hard you cultivate, the fact remains that at the crucial moment you aren’t up to it. It’s not like I’m just *saying* you’re not up to it—it’s that *you* aren’t up to it. Some people think, “Teacher, I can make it through any ordeal. Just bring ’em on, so I can cultivate up sooner.” But when the critical moment arrives, you still can’t make it. Lip service won’t do; what we have to see is how you conduct yourself during actual cultivation.

Question: Master, could you tell us more about other laws and truths derived from Zhen-Shan-Ren at different levels?*

Teacher: I can’t. Why not? Because Heaven’s laws absolutely can’t be told to humans. You are still humans doing cultivation. The part of you that’s been fully cultivated is already aware, without having to be told. So it’s the human part of you that is always curious about things. Even when you enlighten to things at higher levels, you still can’t tell them to other people. When you tell others through your mouth about the high-level truths you’ve enlightened to, you’ll find that they don’t sound quite the same and have become very ordinary, mundane truths. That is to say, higher-level laws and truths can only be understood in cultivation, but not expressed in words.

Question: How do we distinguish demonic interference from tribulations arranged by Teacher?

Teacher: Nothing happens in isolation. A cultivator’s path of life is altered the day he starts to do cultivation, and nothing accidental will get mixed in. But the tribulations that occur will always seem random, and only that way can you be tested, can it allow you to improve, and can it allow you to recognize your own inadequacies and see where you fall short. Are there real demons, then? Yes, there are. But they don’t exist in isolation, either. They will leap out since they’re bad. And it’s fine if they leap out—we’ll use their negative aspects to test our students. You might know that a few of our students passed away. Some of them reached Consummation, while some [died to] do harm to us. So I didn’t make any comments on the matter or offer any explanation. Yet I think those things were a test of life and death for our students. Although they didn’t happen to you personally, it was almost as if they did. You’re sure to have felt like that. It’s a critical test of life and death, then. If a person can’t abandon his concern for life and death, he absolutely won’t be able to Consummate.

However, it’s not that every one of us has to undergo a test of life and death—that’s not the case. Since you’re building up a foundation through a long period of cultivation, you’ll gradually reach that point. As you have fewer and fewer attachments and are able to let go of more and more things, you’ll find that nothing matters anymore. Then you’re in fact ready for it. So some tests will emerge at critical moments, just like what happened in Beijing not too long ago, when [you were tested to see] whether you could take this step. Or, when a student suddenly died right there, [you were tested to] see if you could still keep cultivating. Tests of all sorts and of various natures try you out to see whether you can emerge. Those who died might not have been demons, but they’re not necessarily Buddhas, either. It could be that it was time for that person to Consummate, and we used his death to test you. Or it could be that he was a demon. So we may have used the incident to see whether you’d still keep up your cultivation and whether you could let go and move beyond—both of these things are extremely important. Nothing is coincidental, then, and everything that comes up is directly testing you.

Question: How does a person make use of the side of him that has attained the Fa to defeat the demonic side [of himself]?

⁴ Translator’s note: “Scripture,” as used in this context, refers to any of the various writings of Master Li.

Teacher: Even a little righteousness can subdue a hundred evils. Demonic interference occurs because we have inadequacies. When you conduct yourself well, you *are* winning the battle, and Master will take care of you. You can't fight against the demons directly. Not at present, at least. There's an article in *Essentials for Further Advancement* that I wrote not too long ago which was written not for this side of you, but for the side of you that's been fully cultivated. At critical moments, that side also needs to do something. Of course, he can't be like you and do things like you—that's absolutely prohibited. A god absolutely cannot do the same things a human does. He's only permitted to do so under the circumstance that demons are doing damage.

Question: Teacher, you said, "I'm not within Zhen-Shan-Ren." How can this be explained?

Teacher: I don't want to talk about things of too high a level, and I don't want to talk about myself. I disclosed that because some students are always unsure, so I gave you assurance. How should a person understand it? It's simple, yet I still can't spell it out for you explicitly. The cosmos was created for living beings. Accordingly, it must have a nature, which is Zhen-Shan-Ren. Yet at different levels Zhen-Shan-Ren generates Fa for different levels, creating environments for living beings at different levels that have different requirements. This means that the Fa becomes increasingly complex at lower levels. That's how these things work.

Question: Even the foundation of science is wrong. We're science teachers, so how do we take the right approach?

Teacher: Today's science has been imposed on humankind by alien beings. No people in any historical period or in any civilization ever had science like this—the entire society is involved with it, everyone is getting himself wrapped up in it, and every parent wants to see their children go to college. Never before in history has this happened. Gods arrange how human society develops. For example, in ancient China a god was sent down to invent paper-making, and another god was sent down to invent the compass. They did those things for people. The whole society didn't need to get involved, nor was a "science" like today's needed—a science which everyone gets wrapped up in and which has created distorted types of living beings like we have today. This is something that never ever happened before, yet it has now become the reality of today's society. You have to conform to this reality if you're to survive. For the time being, you have to do things this way if you're to make a living. As [Dafa] students, no matter what profession you're in, you should carry on with what you're doing. If you're a science teacher, then teach science. It's not about what you do. What I'm talking about is a principle. I'm telling you the whole truth.

I'll give you an example. While cleaning up the alien beings, I said to them: "You've deformed the human race. Your system of things has seriously damaged human society and distorted people's thinking." Since they couldn't offer any justification, they came back with this argument, "But you're making use of us, too." I do travel by car and use other modern tools. "Yet," I said to them, "even if I wanted to travel on horseback these days, there are no settings that would allow me to do so, for you've destroyed them all. Isn't that true?!" So we can only live with it, right? For the time being, go ahead and carry on with what you've been doing. The science of the future might be different. I've noticed that scientific definitions made in the past are now being gradually overturned, for they simply can't explain lots of things. As changes in the celestial body are continually being discovered and as the mysteries of life are continually being revealed, I'd say that the old science is faltering.

Question: Human beings are complicated and their minds are scattered. One can only get back to one's own original state through cultivation that removes all divergent elements.

Teacher: At birth human beings are very pure and innocent and lack any postnatally acquired notions, for they haven't yet come into contact with society. That's why I really enjoy watching children—they're so pure and simple. Even if they're a bit naughty it doesn't matter: They have nothing, and have no set ways of thinking. In order to make a living and protect his own self-interest, a person gradually forms many notions and intentionally does a lot of bad things in order to benefit himself. As a result, the various notions a person forms later in life will be in opposition to his original nature. In other words, human beings become complicated. That pure, innocent heart and mind of yours become more and more contaminated by various impurities later in life. To go back to your original state, you have to get rid of all the bad things that have been formed after birth—and not only bad things of human beings, but also other realms' things that prevent you from

returning to that state. You must clear all of them out in order to become pure to that extent. Your mind, *xinxing*,* the material composition of your body, and your very being—all of these have to reach that level of purity.

Question: Tathagata Buddha Sakyamuni has the Saha Paradise, yet he's also in the Dafan Paradise. How does one make sense of that?

Teacher: That's true. It's said in Buddhism that Sakyamuni is in the Saha Paradise, and that is true. As Sakyamuni was coming to Earth from the sixth layer of universes to offer people salvation, the last one of his own paradises [where he sojourned] was the Dafan Paradise. After he came down from the Dafan Paradise to save people, he never went back, and he's been in the Three Realms watching his disciples ever since. For over two thousand years he has been watching his disciples all along. Through repeated reincarnations, his disciples have been continually raising their levels and realms, accumulating their mighty virtue, and waiting for the time when the Fa is eventually rectified so that they can assimilate to the Fa and Consummate. The Saha Paradise is [in] the Three Realms, so disciples in the Buddha system have discovered that he's been in the Saha Paradise, and they therefore say that Buddha Sakyamuni is in the Saha Paradise. As for the Dafan Paradise, it was the last Buddha-paradise on his way here. In fact, that's not the only paradise he has: He has other paradises at higher levels. Don't think about heavenly affairs and the things of Buddhas with your human mind, as you will never understand them. You only have human thoughts right now, so I discourage you from inquiring about those things for knowledge—you'll never get anywhere. The reason is, the human part of a person's mind is really deficient.

Question: What are the six paths in the "sixfold path of reincarnation"?

Teacher: Buddhism has always talked about the paths of *asura*,* animals, humans, and heavens. Let me tell you that no matter the path, they're all reincarnations within the Three Realms among humans, animals, substances, plants, and living beings in other dimensions within the Three Realms. The reincarnations are retributions—either rewards or tribulations—that came from the causal reasons which resulted from how good or bad a person was in the world. That is, if you do a lot of wicked things, you might reincarnate on the path of animals or even go to hell. If you do a lot of good things, you'll reincarnate on the path of heavens or you might enjoy ease and comfort, a high-ranking position, or wealth among human beings; the heavens referred to here are the different levels of heavens in the Three Realms, as they're within the boundary of the Three Realms and [lives there are] still subject to reincarnation. These are obtained by doing good deeds, and it's called "the repayment of blessings" or "the rewards for goodness."

Question: Some site coordinators have held those positions for a long time yet still hold onto ordinary human notions and have unwittingly influenced the new students at the sites.

Teacher: That's a fact, for sure. A very small number of Assistants at some practice sites haven't conducted themselves well, and it's time we learned a lesson from this problem. Many of the articles I wrote in *Essentials for Further Advancement* were written for them, yet they don't read them. On the other hand, being an Assistant is a tough job, and they have to work on helping others. Where do they usually fall short, though? It's that they don't integrate their work with their cultivation. And as a result, when they come across problems or obstacles, they can't assess the situation with the Fa nor find faults within themselves. [They neglect to ask:] "Have I done something wrong that might have caused this lack of cooperation among our students or all these obstacles?" Most Assistants aren't able to examine themselves this way when it comes to this. It has done a lot of harm to our Fa and has created obstacles to obtaining the Fa for many new students. It's time they were jolted out of their stupor.

Some of our Assistants are rude to our students. That's absolutely unacceptable in our Dafa. Think about it, everyone: Anyone who studies this Fa is my disciple. You are my disciple, and so is the next person. So why are you so rude to him? We practice kindheartedness—treating others kindheartedly. I often say this: When a person talks to someone else, if he points out that person's shortcomings or tells him something without attaching any of his own notions, the other person will be moved to tears. If you don't have any personal agenda, don't seek to gain anything, don't even want to protect yourself, truly mean well, and are thinking about the other person, then that person will really see your heart—no matter what kind of person he is. Yet many of us often fail to do our work this way and resort to mandates, which is unacceptable! That's not part of our Fa.

Question: I don't understand why certain Dafa cultivators do not assimilate to the Fa and lie.

Teacher: It isn't right to tell lies. A cultivator has ordinary human attachments; as long as he hasn't reached Consummation, he has ordinary human attachments. I want to tell you about one point, though: Whether he's [just] a student or is [also] working for Dafa, it's precisely the attachments that haven't yet been discarded that play out most—the attachments he can't abandon among everyday people stand out. Why? Because what has been fully cultivated and the attachments that have been abandoned are gone, so they no longer show. Then the attachments that remain are particularly obvious and everyone can see them. But let me tell you that you can't say that this person isn't good. He's already quite good in fact. It's just that the attachments he hasn't yet discarded are playing a role and affecting both his work and other students, and many people see his behavior. So don't assess a situation or judge someone in the same way everyday people do. On the other hand, we shouldn't think that we've cultivated pretty well and then slack off in eliminating those remaining attachments. That wouldn't do. Once we detect a problem, we must look for its causes in ourselves.

I think that from now on all of you disciples of mine should examine yourselves amidst problems, in relationships, or when problems arise in studying the Fa or among our disciples. [Ask yourself:] "Is there something I've done wrong?" Every one of you should conduct yourself this way and cultivate your mind (*xin*). If you spend your energy on external things and look for others' shortcomings instead of working hard on your own mind, how can you improve yourself? Others will improve and advance in cultivation after you point out their shortcomings, but you'll still be here. That's why I tell you that whenever any problems occur or whenever you feel uneasy inside, you should look inside yourself for causes. I can guarantee that the problem lies within you. It's been said in Buddhism that Buddha is in one's mind (*xin*). People have actually taken this literally, as though there's a Buddha in their minds. They don't understand. The meaning is actually this: You must cultivate your mind—work hard on your own mind—and find your own weaknesses and shortcomings and then eradicate them. You will never be able to Consummate if your *xinxing* doesn't meet the criteria. So why not work hard on cultivating your mind? Why not work hard on yourself? Having you expose your weaknesses during frictions with each other is how I enable you to improve most rapidly. And yet as soon as you encounter a problem, you push it aside and point out others' shortcomings instead of examining yourselves. How can you cultivate, then? This is precisely the best way for me to have you improve. So you must turn your mindset around. As to our students telling lies, there are indeed some people who exhibit poor *xinxing*. If you can help people who are like that, then point it out to them. But I think that it's still up to them to make real improvements. If they don't study the Fa themselves, no problem will be resolved. Put another way, improving themselves is their own business. If they fall behind and don't want to improve, it's *they* who won't make it in cultivation.

Question: I'd like to ask about the connection among the godly side, the human side, and one's master soul (zhu yuanshen) and subordinate soul(s) (fu yuanshen).

Teacher: An ordinary person doesn't have a godly side, only we true cultivators do, and it has to be people cultivating in this form, that of our Dafa. That's because we transform you from the very origin of your existence and we cultivate in a reverse way. It's relatively fast this way, because you can cultivate in ordinary human society, conforming as much as possible to the way of everyday people, and, at the same time, you can directly improve your *xinxing* in this complicated environment. It's the quickest way. Accordingly, in our Dafa, the part of your body made up of submicroscopic particles—or the submicroscopic-particle matter that has attained the Fa and reached the standard—is already a God side, a Buddha side, or a Dao* side. As for the human side, it's the you that you see now. When this surface body of yours is transformed at the final stage of your cultivation, or at the time when you eventually Consummate, your human side will no longer exist. When your human side no longer exists, it is assimilated to your godly side and you Consummate. Along with the way your body changes, you'll experience a state of Complete Enlightenment and undergo a fundamental change—it's something you can't imagine whatsoever. It's a scene so great, so magnificent, and so spectacular that it is absolutely beyond your imagination. As for the connection between one's soul (*yuanshen*) and subordinate soul, I've discussed this when talking about the structure of the human body. So I won't take time for that now. Read the book more.

Question: Is it true that the moment an evil thought arises, bad karma is produced, and that when a good thought arises, good karma is accumulated?

Teacher: That's not how it works. I was just discussing it a moment ago. Karma only manifests in our ordinary human society, that is, in the human world. The positive and the negative coexist in all matter. Where there are Buddhas, there are also demons; where there are human beings, there are ghosts; where there are good people, there are bad people; where there are believers, there are doubters; where there is support, there is opposition. Even when it comes to human beings, there are males and females. Everything exists in opposition to something else, and everything has a *yin-yang* relationship—that is, a relationship of mutual-generation and mutual-inhibition. So when people do wicked deeds they definitely produce bad karma, and their thoughts are evil. In Buddhism they differentiate between good karma and bad karma. I've found that even the good karma that people talk about has two sides to it, one positive and one negative. So in my view, it is, strictly speaking, not appropriate [to describe it that way].

We won't talk about today's Buddhism, for it is Buddhism in the End of Dharma. Let's talk about Buddhism during a relatively good period in history. It was a cultivation group then, and everyone safeguarded the cultivation group with kindness. But if someone tried to damage or attack it, they would, like others, take corresponding measures to protect themselves. So it also had a negative side, which was the evil side: If you damage my monastery, I may risk my life fighting you; if you harm our monks or disciples, I'll retaliate fiercely. That is, even in good deeds, a negative side, or the evil side, always existed. So, strictly speaking, their idea of good karma and bad karma isn't comprehensive. They only have the ability to talk about it in a general sense.

In order to articulate how the positive substances and the negative substances precisely play out and how they truly manifest, we call the best part—what's most meaningful to human beings and most beneficial to cultivators, as it can be directly transformed into *gong**—virtue (*de*). And in fact, it really *is* the virtue normally talked about. As for karma, we use the term to refer to all bad karma, the evil side of “good karma,” the evil side of things, and all things that belong to the negative side. It's more accurate to refer to them this way. As for a person's mind-intent, if a bad thought arises in an everyday person's mind, if he intends to do something bad but doesn't take action, or if no bad outcome occurs, then no karma is produced. If he doesn't succeed in doing it, he doesn't produce karma; if he does succeed in doing it, he produces karma. And that karma will manifest in his body and in the field around his body. However, when a person has a bad thought, thought-karma is produced in his mind. That's why thoughts about bad-mouthing someone, about opposing or doubting, or about wavering in your own cultivation, and so on, arise in the minds of our cultivators and disrupt them.

When you sit in meditation and find that your mind is running wild and bothered by all sorts of things, it's precisely because those things are having an effect. I'm spelling this principle out to you in a precise manner. I've found that monks in ancient times basically stayed in temples and didn't have contact with complex society, so their minds were relatively simple. Moreover, they often stayed in meditation without coming out of trance, which made their minds very simple and allowed them to be free of thoughts about protecting their self-interest. And that would, in turn, reduce the occurrence of thought-karma and of disruption from it. So they often sat in deep meditation and meditated in seclusion, the real purpose of which was to cultivate in tranquility. Since cultivation depends on oneself and *gong* depends on one's master, the masters from their cultivation way or from the relevant paradise were looking after them and removing their thought-karma in the course of their tranquil cultivation. That's something I also do for you. You can't do it yourself.

Question: I've been repelling my thought-karma, but sometimes it takes a long time. How can we eliminate it more effectively?

Teacher: “How can we eliminate it more effectively?” Your words indicate that you want to find a shortcut, a simpler way. No situation is isolated. You brought about the karma yourself, so in your cultivation you have to suffer to eliminate it. In the midst of suffering, you improve yourself and are tested as to whether you're unwavering. If it were removed all at once, you wouldn't have much left to cultivate. It's absolutely unacceptable if you don't concretely and genuinely change yourself. If you couldn't reach that standard, when you got to a heavenly paradise and saw those great and majestic Enlightened Beings sitting there, your heart would tremble: “Uh-oh, I haven't done enough cultivating, I can't stay here.” You would know on your own that you couldn't stay

there. So we have to cultivate firmly and solidly every step of the way. If you don't reach the standard, it absolutely isn't permitted and you can't make it.

What if you can't get rid of thought-karma? Let me tell you that a person's notions are formed not only in one lifetime, but accumulated life after life. They even exist in extremely deep parts of your body, they're not just on the surface. What can you do about them? As you continually cultivate, you are weakening them and getting rid of them. You are already doing that. Then until you Consummate, your thinking will still produce karma and that thing will still exist. So you should find a way to restrain and overcome it—that's cultivation! You aren't cultivating if you let yourself slack off. Thought-karma's interference with humans is extremely severe. When a person's thought-karma is strong, it can even disturb him to the extent that he can't practice anymore. Read the book more—the Fa is in the book, and everything I can use to help you is in the Fa—so that your karma can be eliminated.

Question: If a person can't maintain his xinxing when tribulations come, will the next tribulation be bigger than the previous one?

Teacher: That was explained in *Zhuan Falun*. That is, [some people] can't regard themselves as cultivators in their cultivation, they can't clear the hurdles that are arranged by the master to facilitate their progress, and they stay at the same level for a long time. Yet cultivation doesn't wait for you. If you can't pass a tribulation, the next one will come—we've got to have you improve somehow. So if you don't pass one tribulation and the next one comes, how will you overcome them with the two of them combined? If you become more deluded, it's more likely that you won't overcome it. Then yet another tribulation comes, and this one becomes a deadly hurdle that's impossible to overcome. Unless you make a fundamental change, it will really be hard to overcome. Moreover, tribulations can accumulate. If you accumulate more of them, how will you overcome them? That's why I tell you that you have to regard yourself as a practitioner.

Some people first came to learn our Dafa to cure their illnesses. We don't disapprove of that, as a transitional period is needed to understand Dafa. Later on, they realized: "Dafa isn't for getting healed, yet with ailments in my body I, as a cultivator, can't cultivate and develop *gong*." What to do, then? They knew: "Oh, I won't think about it, then. I won't ask Teacher to heal me and I won't think about having my health problem fixed. But I know that as long as I cultivate, Teacher will definitely heal me." Part of their minds still think [about their ailment]. Have they changed fundamentally? No. What appears on the surface to be good is phony. If a person can't make a fundamental change in himself, he can't reach the standard. High-level lives, as Enlightened Beings, see things very clearly, nothing can be hidden from them. This person hasn't reached the standard, hasn't changed himself fundamentally, and still holds on to that attachment, only it's become more concealed. Yet the being looking after his cultivation sees it clearly. Then who's he deceiving? He's deceiving himself. So a person must let go of the attachment and truly meet the standard for a cultivator. If a person can't let go of it, the problem will drag on and on and he'll always be lingering in that tribulation. It's a very serious thing. There have always been students like that.

Question: Cultivators aren't attached to wealth. They only guard their virtue, instead of trying to accumulate virtue. Is Teacher's scripture, "Wealth and Virtue," discussing the minimum requirement for those disciples who aren't diligent in their practice?

Teacher: A cultivator isn't attached to it. Not being attached to anything doesn't mean that you don't have anything. Eliminating your desire for wealth and for making a fortune, and eliminating your attachment to money doesn't mean that you won't have wealth. Cultivators guard their virtue but don't accumulate virtue because, as cultivators, the time we have in this life is quite limited to begin with. If you were to go running around trying to do good deeds, how could those intention-filled acts help you to improve your *xinxing* and truly cultivate? They couldn't. So you can only Consummate if you hurry up and cultivate and change yourself fundamentally. Besides, many things in ordinary human society have karmic connections, and resentment and gratitude have accumulated over time. Chances are you can only see the surface of affairs and not their karmic connections, so your intervening in things would probably be wrong. If intervening is wrong for an everyday person, so be it, since everyday people only need to conform to the principles at the level of ordinary human society. But you are a cultivator and you are held to a higher standard. If you intervene the wrong way, it's by no means a minor thing. You'll have to bear responsibility for it,

and so your *gong* and your level will fall. And if you keep on doing that, how will you Consume? That's why we say that you shouldn't always think about accumulating virtue. You only need to do cultivation, and all of the substances that are needed in your cultivation will be transformed through your enduring hardships, cultivating, and making sacrifices. Any insufficient substances can be made up, so you don't need to do those things. Only your heart matters.

In true cultivation only the heart and mind matters. Everything can be done for you so long as your heart is with Buddha and your mind meets the standard for cultivation. As for a person who's enshrouded by karma, from what I see, even his bones are black. How could an everyday person change himself fundamentally and reach the realm of a Buddha? No matter how much virtue you accumulated or how many good deeds you did, could you change all of those things that you've done lifetime after lifetime? You can't change them in the least. Accumulating virtue isn't cultivation. That won't do it. So you can only make the best use of your time and speed up your cultivation. We only look at your heart and mind. As long as you cultivate, we can transform any problem into a good thing—bad things can be turned into good things. You have to be responsible for all of the karmic debts you owe, but we can take care of those things for you. Let's suppose that in your past lifetimes you killed and harmed many lives, and those have to be paid back by you. Even if you were to pay with your life one lifetime after another, continually reincarnating to pay with your life, you still couldn't pay the debt. So how could you possibly cultivate? If, after you reach Consummation and consummate your paradise, all of the lives that you've harmed are saved to your paradise to become common beings, won't it be a good thing then? And your karmic debts will be settled. But who's going to do that for you? Only the person who saves you—it has to be someone with that ability—can do that for you; you have to pay back your debt, and that arrangement is considered repayment. If you can't cultivate into a Buddha, however, you'll never manage to pay all those karmic debts of yours. That's how these things work. That is, just focus on your cultivation and don't be concerned about those things of yours—your master will take care of everything for you.

Question: Some students heard and believed some things that harm the Fa, but now they've realized their error and regret it. Can they still Consume?

Teacher: On the road of cultivation, no one can necessarily pass every test really well—everyone makes mistakes. If you could pass every test well, I'd say you don't need to cultivate, as you can already Consume. You pass some tests well, and you fail to pass some well, but you regret it and you try to do well next time. You pass a test well, and don't pass a test well, tempering yourself in the process. *That* is cultivation. (*Applause*) But I'll tell you, don't be happy just yet. You might think: "Oh, so it doesn't matter whether I pass the tests well or not. I'll just go ahead take my time, and that will be cultivation." That's unacceptable! You must be diligent. If you slack off and aren't diligent, I can see your heart then too, and you aren't being responsible for yourself. So you have to regard yourself as a true cultivator and take this seriously. Only then can you raise your level as quickly as possible.

Question: Would it affect their cultivation if monastic disciples attended the morning and evening sessions?⁵

Teacher: I'll find the most effective ways to prevent you from being affected. We have many monks and Daoist priests in monasteries and temples, along with people from other religions, studying Dafa. Let me tell you this principle: We aren't particularly concerned about any religions or any other forms that people in ordinary society establish. We only regard them as everyday people's work. Since Buddhas no longer look after people or save them, aren't those only forms used in ordinary human society? So I just regard them as jobs. For that reason we don't pay special attention to them. I've never said that we have to go to temples to convert monks. We're only concerned with people's hearts and minds. Regardless of which realm, level, or social class you come from, we only look at your heart and mind. Some people think, "If we convince high-ranking officials to learn [Dafa], they'll bring many people along." That's not what I want. The people who'd come to learn under their command wouldn't truly be coming to obtain the Fa. I don't want that. So I don't care which social class you come from, I only look at your heart and mind. I don't care if you belong to a religion, I only look at your heart and mind. You're all sentient beings. I will be responsible to whoever can cultivate. If someone doesn't cultivate, that's fine too.

⁵ Translator's note: This is a reference to certain religious observances practiced in temples or monasteries.

It was the same with religions in the old days. Buddhas didn't recognize religions. Religions were names crafted by ordinary people. Back in the early days, when Sakyamuni established his form of cultivation with a monastic order, he didn't call it a religion either. So Buddhas only look at people's minds, not at the formalities that people uphold. Upholding them is itself an attachment, it's something everyday people can't let go of, and it's not true cultivation of Buddhahood. In cultivation of Buddhahood, as long as a person cultivates, I'll be responsible to him regardless of who he is. I consider his heart to be the purest among living beings, a heart truly for cultivation and kindness. I'll be responsible for him after seeing that heart. As for attending the morning and evening sessions and reading or chanting old scriptures or the Bible, if you're a lay Buddhist or an ordinary person, I'd recommend you stop doing that and concentrate on practicing Dafa, as this is a serious thing. But monks or clergymen can do those things for the time being. I just regard those as your job. No God or Buddha is looking after things anyway. When you reach a certain level, you'll know for yourself what to do. I've opened the most convenient door for you, and I only look at people's minds. (*Applause*)

Question: After disciples have Consummated up there, can they still listen to Teacher's Fa-teaching?

Teacher: You're still using human thoughts to imagine the way gods are. Let me tell you: By then you will have your own disciples listening to you teaching Fa. The history of your cultivation establishes mighty virtue for your future and will become a great and majestic Fa. Outwardly things seem pretty plain, as you're cultivating in ordinary human society. But things you're not aware of are recorded. Whether or not you can sense them, they're all kept on record. So they will all become the mighty virtue you establish. Actually, Buddhas too teach Fa in their paradises. Along with teaching the principles living beings in those realms should follow, they mainly tell the cultivation stories of Buddhas in different heavenly paradises. The stories are so inspiring that even the living beings in the heavenly paradises are moved to tears upon hearing them. That's why I've said that everyone has to reach the standard in cultivation.

Question: Someone in my family, a non-practitioner, bought a book that attacks Dafa. I really want to destroy it, but it contains a lot of photographs of Master.

Teacher: It's fine to destroy the book. This book of ours, too, takes the form of an ordinary book with black words printed on white paper. Without the presence of my Law Bodies, a book is simply printed material and has no inner meanings behind it. It's fine to burn it. That's all. Of course, fire can't burn the things over on the other side. How could ordinary people's fire reach the other side? So it isn't a problem.

Question: Teacher has told us so many principles of the Fa, it makes a person feel that he doesn't know where to begin in his cultivation.

Teacher: Maybe you're a new student and a bit confused. It's actually quite simple. There aren't any rules or taboos. As long as you read the book, you'll know what you should do, and you'll gradually become more and more aware. When your perceptual understanding gradually elevates to a truly rational understanding of Dafa, you'll know even better what to do. It's not that you have to start cultivation with something specific: "Should I cultivate *Ren* first or *Shan* first?" That's not how it works. Maybe you can't do everything well. But cultivation can't be done overnight, just as a person can't immediately get pudgy by overeating. It's impossible to turn yourself into a Buddha in one day. You'll know what to do as long as you read the book.

Question: I've long been worried and upset about failing to move others to tears with my tone, compassion, and reasoning. How should I improve?

Teacher: Don't force yourself to do something. You can't insist on reaching some state. Everything will actually come naturally. I've asked that when you point out other people's shortcomings, you try your best to do it that way. What I told you was just that principle, and if you follow that, it will bring good results. It's hard for you to truly let go of everything, become free of any intent, and attain *Shan* of that kind of purity. That's because your mind is being constantly purified, and those thoughts of yours that have yet to be purified come out in your speech. All kinds

of messages⁶ come out, with nothing left out. So, different people will have different reactions to what you say. It's bound to be like that. Yet as we keep on cultivating and demanding of ourselves that we act this way, I think we'll probably handle things better and better. With more kindness and compassion, you'll have surpassed everyday people. And when you've surpassed everyday people, even if what you say isn't that pure, it will still have an impact and will touch people.

Question: A devout Christian heard that Jesus' paradise only has Caucasians in it. In which level or paradise will her soul rest in peace when she passes away?

Teacher: Her religious practice will be in vain. She's just like an everyday person. Her kindness will only be rewarded with blessings, and she will still reincarnate in the realm of ordinary people. That's how it is.

Question: Is the realm of "Void" (Xu), as in "The Profound Fa Reaches the Void" (Xuan Fa Zhi Xu),⁷ within Zhen-Shan-Ren?

Teacher: Everything falls within the principles of the cosmos' Fa. In the past, the Dao system talked more about the Void. First, it's actually a manifestation of the way one realm is. When Heaven and Earth were created, it was referred to as the Great Void (*Tai Xu*). In the eyes of different gods, the creation of Heaven and Earth doesn't manifest at the same level. The process of renewing different paradises and different universes in the cosmos is referred to as "the creation of Heaven and Earth" as well. The Dao system regards it as the highest realm. Secondly, in your cultivation state, this "void" means that you need to forsake your human side. Human beings view humans as the most real. When the master soul has let go of everything, the human side is void. For people who cultivate their subordinate souls, it's said that their knowing soul (*shishen*) dies and their soul (*yuanshen*) is born. In the past they called the subordinate soul "the soul."

Question: The part of us that's been fully cultivated will be separated. Then under what circumstances will we lose that part?

Teacher: As soon as that part of you has reached the standard in cultivation, it immediately moves over at a fast speed. The speed at the part that constitutes your existence at the submicroscopic level is faster than a rocket—it moves at a tremendous speed. But usually when it comes to the human part—the body that's formed by substances in the Three Realms—the process slows down immediately, as if brakes were applied. It's really hard to take even just one step forward. That's because it's really just so hard for human beings to let go of their attachments. We normally experience a feeling when a separation takes place. What feeling do we have? Here are some examples. Some people may have learned the Fa by heart before but then they suddenly forget it. Some might feel that they were doing pretty well in cultivation, that they were in a pretty good state, and that they were seeing things clearly. But all of a sudden things change for the worse. Some people have asked, "Have I fallen?" No, that's not the case. It's just that at that instant the part that has reached the standard gets separated. So what remains is the part that hasn't been completely cultivated, and you'll thus feel that you aren't doing well. That's how it works in Dafa cultivation.

Question: Why is it so difficult to obtain the video and audio tapes of Teacher's overseas Fa-lectures?

Teacher: Why is it you're so attached? You're very much attached. The book *Zhuan Falun* contains everything. Actually, all of the things I've spoken about are contained in *Zhuan Falun*. It's only that I've spoken more specifically to students in various regions with regard to their situations. Don't be attached to those things, calm down, and cultivate steadily. *Zhuan Falun* is the main book, while other things are supplementary reading. As for *Essentials for Further Advancement*, that's a book our Assistants and coordinators should keep in mind at all times and read regularly.

Question: Our gong that's developed through cultivation is stored in every cell of our bodies, right down to the elements of the particles of the original matter at the extreme submicroscopic level. So is this gong's substance even finer than the particles of the original matter?

⁶ Translator's note: The Chinese term used here, *xinxi*, can refer to certain types of intangible energy, influences, or information that are transmittable.

⁷ Translator's note: This is part of the four-line formula said in conjunction with the fourth exercise.

Teacher: How submicroscopic your *gong's* level is, and how high your cultivation level is, these go hand in hand. The level you attain through cultivation is your Attainment Status. What you obtain at your Attainment Status is what you get. Those who've cultivated to a level higher than you will certainly have a higher level of *gong* and Attainment Status. Their *gong* will be more submicroscopic and more powerful than yours, for sure. Everything comes from your Attainment Status, everything comes from your mighty virtue, and everything is evidence of your lifelong cultivation.

Question: *Which came into being first, the cosmos or Buddha Fa?*

Teacher: Buddha Fa is the laws that Buddhas enlighten to from the Great Fa of the cosmos. Without the cosmos, where would Buddha or Buddha Fa come from? You will never know the ultimate structure of the cosmos. No matter how high the level you reach through cultivation, you will never know it. So stop pursuing knowledge.

Question: *When a person is about to Consummate, eighty percent of his gong and his xinxing yardstick will be taken down to enrich his own small universe. At that time, how is his xinxing measured? Is it only twenty percent of the original level?*

Teacher: Everything that's consummated testifies to one's *xinxing*. The *gong* column before reaching Consummation isn't considered a person's true Attainment Status; it mainly represents a person's *xinxing* level. After someone reaches Consummation, the level of his *xinxing* will be the level of the Attainment Status he reaches. If the level is Bodhisattva, he'll be a Bodhisattva; if the level is Arhat, he'll be an Arhat; if the level is Buddha, he'll be a Buddha. That's his level. All of what will have been consummated by him is the measure of his mighty virtue, and his Attainment Status is a testimony of everything he has. Almost every cultivation system works this way. As long as you are a living being in this cosmos, you shouldn't worry about this since a person must necessarily cultivate this way. How could someone go up to the heavens and then have nothing up there?

Question: *Someone said that according to you, it's too slow to finish Zhuan Falun in a day and a half?*

Teacher: I've never said that! I'd say that's too fast. (*Applause*) I told you to make the best use of your time to read the book, but that person immediately went to the other extreme. He reads, reads, reads, reads, reading with all his might, not even knowing what words he's reading. Then what are you reading? Aren't you supposed to be *studying* the Fa? What happened to the "studying" part of "studying the Fa"? If you don't even know what you're reading, how can you cultivate? You have to know what's before your eyes! You should know the surface meaning of the words you're reading. If you don't, how could it count as studying the Fa? What would be the use of reading the book then? You might as well take the book, flip through it, and tell yourself you're done. Right? Do you see what I'm saying?

Question: *When we do the first four exercises, should we keep our hands conjoined at the end of each exercise, or separate the hands and then conjoin them again?*

Teacher: The hands are conjoined once in between exercises. Don't release your hands—just continue on to the next exercise.

Question: *The scripture "Expounding on the Fa" is hard to understand.*

Teacher: That's how it's supposed to be, because I meant to have you all understand it gradually. Besides, it wasn't written directly for the part of you that hasn't been fully cultivated. But no matter the depth of your understanding, you won't be wrong. It's just that your levels of understanding are different. However much you can understand is fine. If I could make it perfectly clear to you, I wouldn't have written it that way. So just take your time studying it and gradually you will understand it. You aren't the only ones who find it hard to understand—everyone else, the world over, finds it hard to understand.

Question: *Is there any difference in a person's understanding of the truths of the Fa before and after his Enlightenment?*

Teacher: There's no difference in terms of Zhen-Shan-Ren. But that's a general truth. After a person reaches Enlightenment, he suddenly becomes aware of many details of the truths of the Fa, the truths at his level, and the truths at every level below him. The Fa that I've shown you was written in a general manner. You have to wait until you Consummate to see the actual truths of the Fa.

Question: Do the gods who were protected so that they could remain know that there's a Fa in the cosmos? Why didn't they know it in the past?

Teacher: The lives in the cosmos aren't allowed to know the true manifestation of the cosmos's Fa. At no level of the cosmos did lives know there was a Fa in the cosmos. The Fa that I've revealed to you is expressed in human language, but it's still not the same as the specific expression of the Fa's true manifestation. Even after you've reached Consummation later on, you still won't be able to see the Fa's form of existence; many of the cosmos's profound wonders can't be known by lives in the cosmos. Yet all of the scenes in this immense cosmos will be sufficient to make your life interesting. At that time, you won't stop marveling at the scenes of ordinary human society when you open your eyes and see them, not to mention the grand sight—at that high a level—of the sentient beings, of everything there is, and of the structure of the cosmos. That sight is simply beyond description. Yet certain things, like the fundamentals of the cosmos, still can't be known by sentient beings, for they don't have enough mighty virtue—something delimited by the level you reach cultivating.

Question: One shouldn't intentionally try to lose or gain, and one should follow the course of nature—only this way can one meet the requirements of higher principles of the Fa. Is this understanding correct?

Teacher: It's correct in principle. Yet when you can do that, that's because your *xinxing* has reached that state. But what's required of a cultivator is something beyond ordinary human self-control. In cultivation, some people always want to adopt certain approaches. I tell you to cultivate this way, but they insist on coming up with something different, such as not eating and drinking, practicing *bigu* fasting. Or they become slovenly dressed all day long, with men not looking like men and women not looking like women, not caring about their appearances and acting carelessly. Whenever they think about cultivation, they think of the cultivation forms in the past; as soon as they think about cultivation, they think of Zhang Sanfeng,* who went around in shabby clothes. It shouldn't be like this. What I've taught you is to cultivate while conforming as much as possible to the way of everyday people's society. If every one of you dresses sloppily in everyday people's society, it will disrupt principles of the Fa at the level of everyday people's society. I have never behaved that way in front of you. You know, I always dress neatly whenever I give a Fa-speech. I'm showing you by example. You should pay attention to these things.

Question: With Master's infinite wisdom, can the cosmos' law of "formation, stasis, degeneration" be further perfected in the cosmos?

Teacher: This question involves something at a very high level. The characteristic of our Falun is that it can automatically repair everything that falls short of the standard. In other words, it's continually perfecting everything. The purpose of Fa-rectification is to make things more wonderful.

Question: Can we go to sleep right after doing the meditation?

Teacher: Sure, that's not a problem. You can go to sleep if you want to. You can get up in the middle of the night to do the meditation, and when you go to sleep right afterwards, you'll sleep really well.

Question: If a person who appeared to be truly practicing Falun Dafa suddenly died from a car accident, could he be viewed as a demon?

Teacher: I'm not going to talk about that specific incident. I won't answer your question directly. Birth, aging, sickness, and death are just the way of things in human society. During the present time period, you can't tell from the surface whether a person is a cultivator, or whether a person can reach Consummation. I just said that people's minds are constantly tested when faced with critical matters. When someone dies while practicing, you are tested to see what you'll do.

Perhaps that person Consummated, or maybe he was a demon. Nothing happens in isolation. All of these things are used to test students' minds to see if they can still come through at crucial times. There are people who've made sacrifices for this. They reached the realm of Consummation and created an opportunity like that for other students. There are such cases, but in principle I disapprove of those. Then again, there are ones that have come to do damage. They interfere with you precisely that way, striking you at a critical moment. Nonetheless, we make use of them to test people's minds. We make use of them to test people's minds at crucial moments and to see whether you can all still cultivate. Cultivation is extremely serious.

Question: *What's the concept of "Gods," as in "Buddhas, Daos, and Gods"?*

Teacher: You know that in the Buddha's Eight Forms of Heavenly Law-Guardians, there are many gods. Those are gods known in Buddhism. Yet the gods in the cosmos aren't limited to just those. There are different heavenly gods in different realms. They're directly in charge of the living beings in the cosmos and they exist at every different level. Buddhas are a special type of god. They became gods by cultivating compassion and Shan, they're Buddhas. As for Daos, they cultivate Zhen, taking the Zhen of Zhen-Shan-Ren to be fundamental. So they don't offer salvation to all sentient beings after they succeed in cultivation. But they hold that Zhen is everything, that's their Dao, the great Dao of Zhen. And in fact, they're gods too. "Gods" also includes the types of gods I just mentioned who oversee all the affairs of the living beings in the cosmos, as well as those such as Buddhas and Daos. And what's more, there are lots of different higher beings, all kinds of them. I refer to them in a general way as Buddhas, Daos, and Gods.

Question: When the time for cultivation comes to an end, if some people haven't yet reached Enlightenment and the Unlocking of Gong, will eighty percent of their cultivated gong be taken down as well?

Teacher: That doesn't hold for those who don't reach Consummation through cultivation. If a person fails to cultivate to Consummation, the matter of consummating his paradise doesn't exist—it doesn't apply to him. There are just a few possibilities for those who don't Consummate. The first is, if they've truly abandoned their major attachments, then they may go to a level just below their original place. Or, if they want to continue their cultivation, it's possible they will bring with them everything they have that's been sealed and kept for them, reincarnating into the world again to continue their cultivation. In yet another situation, if the person doesn't want to cultivate anymore, what he's attained in his cultivation will be converted into blessings and virtue; it will likely become rewards like wealth, fortune, fame, and rank, which he can enjoy in his next life.

Question: Molecules are made of atoms. Atoms are within molecules. How is it that the overall structure of atoms is bigger than that of molecules?

Teacher: Molecules are not independent particles, they exist in groups. In modern scientific terms, they exist in groups. That is, within their own realm of existence, they are spread everywhere in that void. Actually, this "everywhere" has a limit and a boundary. In other words, the volume of the scope in which atoms exist far exceeds the volume of the scope in which molecules exist and spread. "Atoms are within molecules" is what's perceived with the current scientific and technological means. But that's actually not the right idea.

Question: The Zhen-Shan-Ren Buddha Fa is the Fa of this large universe. Is it also the Fa of other large universes?

Teacher: Yes, it is. Actually, you will never know how enormous this universe is, how far your concept of it can reach, or how broad the boundary of the universe you talked about is. Nor is the capacity of your mind large enough. So you can merely talk about it. Everything is constructed by Zhen-Shan-Ren.

Question: How does Zhen-Shan-Ren generate the laws of other universes?

Teacher: Other universes have the same laws. Within the same realm, no matter how far away a universe may be, like any other universe, it conforms to the Zhen-Shan-Ren law of this cosmic body. They all conform to the same level of laws. No matter how immense you imagine the

universe to be, it is still but a particle within its realm. So a particle must meet the standard of that realm to exist in that realm. And that standard is a manifestation of the specific Fa of that level.

Question: Does boundless mighty virtue come from bearing hardships, or is it something a person originally has?

Teacher: Some originates in that person's realm. Those beings are just at a realm that high and they're just beings at that high a level. The same is true with human beings: If you're born among human beings, your children will be born and grow up as human beings, and they definitely won't be other animals. Many cultivated, Great Enlightened Beings in the cosmos are extraordinary, and among them are ones who've elevated themselves through cultivation.

Question: I've given away books, audiotapes, and videotapes to many people. Yet some of them no longer practice. Should I take back those books and tapes?

Teacher: It's all right to take them back if those people really don't practice anymore. If it isn't convenient to take them back, perhaps someone with a predestined relationship will come across them at the person's home and take them. You can take back those that are convenient to take back. Handle the situation as you see fit.

Question: How should "the more submicroscopic matter that undermines mankind" in the article "A Dialogue with Time" be understood?

Teacher: However you understand it is fine, and you won't understand it incorrectly. Let me put it to you this way: At a certain point in this vast cosmic body, there are no longer any living beings with form. Only formless living beings exist there. They permeate the whole cosmic body, so I just call them matter. Yet they are gods. They can form into any shape, but they don't like to assume a shape. They just exist in that manner. So if the universe has degenerated, all matter—which has both a positive and a negative side—has degenerated as well. The positive side has degenerated, not to mention the negative side.

Question: "It's your responsibility to cultivate your mind, sever your desires, and be clearheaded, wise, and not deluded." Does "your responsibility" refer to a person's own responsibility?

Teacher: That's correct. Cultivation is up to you, isn't it? That's what it means. You yourself have to cultivate. "Cultivate your mind, sever your desires" means that you should cultivate your *xinxing* and sever your worldly pursuits—pursuits for obtaining this, pursuits for obtaining that, and the desire to obtain everything. If you don't do the cultivation yourself, who'll do it for you? If I did the cultivation for you, it couldn't be counted as your cultivation, right? "Be clearheaded, wise, and not deluded" means that when you've gotten rid of all of those things through cultivation, you will see higher principles in the Fa and attain a higher level, eventually reaching the state of Consummation. You'll no longer be affected by low-level things or be driven by ordinary human attachments. Don't all of these things have to be done by you? That's what it means.

Question: Are gods that are in the Three Realms composed of atoms?

Teacher: The living beings of any realm must meet that realm's standard. Yet some gods in the Three Realms surpass the levels of the realms they're in. When I said that their bodies were composed of atoms, I certainly didn't mean the atoms that we see, which are the exteriors of the atoms. This cosmos is really wondrous.

Question: When investigating a case and trying to get evidence, if we adopt a stern manner towards a suspect who refuses to tell the truth, will this contradict our practice of Zhen-Shan-Ren?

Teacher: When that person doesn't tell the truth, it's your job to make him tell the truth. You can speak in a stern manner, but you shouldn't become angry. You shouldn't be abusive, and you should never use violence. There's a certain disparity between how we [Chinese people] handle cases and how other countries do. In other countries evidence is important, whereas Chinese people sometimes make people talk even when they have no evidence. Anyway, handle it properly. That is, handle it well, with a practitioner's standard.

Question: Why is it that people who are likely to obtain the Fa are those who aren't so successful in life?

Teacher: What makes you think that's the case? Many of our disciples who've obtained the Fa are successful businesspeople, and many have a high social status. Young and well-educated people account for the great majority of our Dafa disciples. There are many high-ranking officials and senior executives with high social status. Many in the audience now are successful businesspeople, and they've cultivated very well. There are many doctors, and there are also lawyers. No small number of people among us who've obtained the Fa are from financial sectors, have senior government positions, or are from the industrial and commercial sectors. I can tell you one thing, though: When it comes to cultivation, we treat everyone the same. Our Dafa won't wait for someone because he enjoys fame and prestige. It will never happen that way.

Question: What's the meaning, intention, and history behind the monastic robe Master was wearing?

Teacher: I can tell you that when Sakyamuni was in this world, his disciples wore this type of clothing. It was the climate that led monks in the Han region [of China] to begin wearing local style clothes, that is, the style of laypeople. As a matter of fact, the clothing style that monks now wear was that of laypeople in the Tang and Song dynasties. The only difference is the color. People in the past liked wearing bright clothes. Later on, monks found that to be an attachment, so they began wearing grayish and muddy-colored clothes. Yet the Buddha system's true disciples and the Buddhas in the heavenly paradises wear the same type of clothes as the ones I was wearing, only the material is different. Also, they go barefoot and leave one shoulder exposed. Since we cultivate Buddhahood, of course we like the clothes of the Buddha system. That's all. If you asked a Daoist cultivator to wear clothes like that, he definitely wouldn't wear them, right?

Question: My mother is eighty-four years old. She lives by herself and seldom goes out. Every day, apart from taking her meals, she studies the Fa and does the exercises whenever she has time. So she doesn't have many opportunities to improve her xinxing.

Teacher: Older people do cultivation in their own circumstances. She might not have any hardships now, but while she sits there she'll be made to recall things that made her angry some eight or ten years ago. It's certain she'll be made to recall those things, which is intended to see whether her mind will remain unmoved or whether she'll still get angry over them. Some people sit there and get mad as heck. That is, she won't miss out on anything, I'll somehow make it possible for her to cultivate. Some of our students, young or old, have had experiences like that, in which they're made to recall irritating incidents, and it's to see if they still get angry over them. They'll be made to recall all of their by-gones to see, in one way or another, how they handle them.

Question: Six days ago, I dreamed of Master being with us as we studied the Fa and answering our questions. Master, you were wearing the same clothes as you did yesterday morning when you met with a small group of people.

Teacher: Then you saw things before they happened. Actually, I'm concealing all of these things for you to prevent you from focusing on them or paying too much attention to them, and to have you sense less, so that you cultivate more quickly. Otherwise, you'd ask questions of this sort every day. You would have so many questions: "Why is this? What's that about?" There are an incredible number of wonders in this universe—there are so many of them.

Question: Does a person's strong willpower and ability to endure come with him at birth?

Teacher: They don't come with a person at birth. Let's talk about human beings and take our superficial, human body as an example. If a person has tempered himself through many tribulations in the society of everyday people, he might care less about things. Or, if he's been through a lot, his will becomes strong and he cares less about things. A person can also become stronger through doing cultivation. When one's realm is raised, one's ability to endure increases.

Question: During the cultivation process, can we completely cultivate away each and every kind of bad thing we have?

Teacher: You have to. Some of our students think: "Teacher, we're so bad in ordinary human society. When we've cultivated up to the realm of a Buddha, will we really forget everything about

when we were living as humans?” [You think that way] since you are thinking about what Buddhas are like while you live among ordinary human beings. All of your human thoughts will change, and that includes the structure of your thoughts and the way you think. When you’re free of the constraints of emotion at this level, and the constraints of other kinds of matter in this ordinary human realm, you will disassociate from this environment and cease to be the way you are. When you’ve cultivated up there, this little superficial human form of yours will only remain as a memory, whereas your thoughts will have elevated to the realm of a Buddha, God, or Dao, and they will be the best part of you. You won’t want to touch this most superficial human part [of you]—you won’t even want to recall the memory of it.

Question: When the new cosmos is constructed, will demons still exist at various levels?

Teacher: There’s one thing I can tell you: If there were only positive and no negative things, no living being would find life interesting. If you could succeed easily in everything you did, get whatever you wanted, and have no difficulty getting anything done, you wouldn’t appreciate or value anything. You wouldn’t have that feeling of happiness one gets from overcoming things, nor the joy of triumph. You wouldn’t value or cherish anything in that case, and you’d find life meaningless. People vie and compete in ordinary human society and find it interesting. They think that it will be interesting to look back at it at the end of their lives. That’s how humans are. Yet there will be negative elements at different levels, to be sure. They aren’t brought forth by cultivation, but arranged by the Fa.

Question: What should I do when, while in a tranquil state, I see things that I don’t like to see?

Teacher: If you see them, let it be. Though you don’t want to see them, you have seen them. Don’t pay attention to them. They can’t harm you or touch you. Just let them be and don’t worry about them. That’s especially so when you start from the level of everyday people. When your Third Eye (*tianmu*) can see things, what you see will surely be low-level things that are really bad, and you’ll be scared. But as long as you read the book a lot, learn more of the Fa, and speed up your cultivation, you will quickly break through that level. What you see then will no longer be those things, but good things.

Question: When someone in my family performs the exercises of another qigong, I feel particularly unwell doing the [Falun Gong] exercises at the group practice site. Are the things I see sometimes in some way prophetic?

Teacher: When you see things, just let it be. Don’t regard them as anything important. Even if you can see some things that are about to happen, I think you should ignore them. Maintain your *xinxing* and cultivate. As to others interfering with your cultivation or someone in your family practicing another *qigong*, normally those things don’t affect us. If you feel that those things are disturbing you, it could be that they’re testing you to see how your mind reacts. Since we’re practicing a righteous way, a great way, nothing can interfere with you. If our own minds aren’t solid, it’s a problem with our *xinxing*, and unusual situations will appear.

Question: I’ve been practicing Falun Gong for a few months now and find it really good. But earlier I converted to a certain religion and am now in a dilemma. Teacher, please advise me.

Teacher: Cultivation is a person’s own business. You choose whichever cultivation way you prefer. If you want to cultivate in a religion, then you can do so. If you want to cultivate in Dafa, then you can cultivate in Dafa. You have to take this step yourself. Since I, too, see that you’re in a dilemma, I need to see how you take this step. What you learn is up to you. Yet I have explained many principles clearly. In the Three Realms, no righteous gods are looking after human beings, and no righteous gods are saving people. That’s what I can tell you all.

Question: I feel that I don’t have enough time, so I often cut my sleep time short. Does this count as an attachment?

Teacher: No, it doesn’t. If you want to find some time in the evening to do the exercises because your time is really tight and you’re busy during the day, I’d say that’s excellent. The condition of your body won’t deteriorate any because of your doing the exercises, nor will you suffer from lack of sleep. Those things won’t happen. On the contrary, you will sleep more soundly after doing the exercises, and you will feel more energetic. It’s bound to be that way.

Question: Christians and Catholics believe that there's only one god up there: Jesus. How can we help them to believe that there's more than one god?

Teacher: That's up to them. I've explained the principles. Actually, it's written in both the Old Testament and the New Testament that Jesus isn't the only god. At a minimum, there was Yahweh before Jesus. Many other heavenly gods were mentioned in both the New and Old Testaments. In ancient Greece many gods taught Fa here among mankind. It's up to people themselves how they understand these things. Actually, Buddhism has likewise taught that Sakyamuni isn't the only Buddha. Of course, Sakyamuni mentioned Buddha Amitabha and the six primeval Buddhas. He said that Tathagatas are as countless as the grains of sand in the Ganges river, etc., and that there's an uncountable number of Great Bodhisattvas. Yet some monks insist that Sakyamuni is the only Buddha. How can they be so narrow-minded as to think that Sakyamuni is the only Buddha? We can ask them to read the Fa so that they'll know what it is. It's up to them whether they learn it. If they insist on sticking to their own understanding, then let them be. We only advise people to be good, and will never drag anyone here. You need to remember this.

Question: Since a person's gong assumes his image, why can a fake Buddha created by people's worship take gong away from a person?

Teacher: He can't take away a person's gong. He can only take qi from an everyday person. That's how it is. He can't take away any energy. So why would he take something from a person? It's because he's created by everyday people's worship, and his realm of thought is thus at the same level as everyday people. Why do humans steal? Because they have that mentality.

Question: Upon Consummation, can those disciples who go to other paradises bring with them the Falun in their belly?

Teacher: You only need to concentrate on cultivating. You don't know what you're about. Just practice diligently and make constant progress. You should be concerned about how to reach Consummation, as that is your top priority. To cultivate and return as quickly as possible is the most important thing for you. Don't think about other things. I, your master, will definitely give you the best. (Applause) For whom is the new universe and everything of the future created? Aren't they created for all lives? Isn't that right? Parents always want to give their children the best. They especially want to give them a better future. They all have that intention. (Applause)

Question: Since Consummation takes place in an instant, how will one know Master's instructions?

Teacher: You will be contacted when you're about to Consummate. Many things will be told to you directly. It's not like what's said by some people who claim to have Consummated. All of those who claim to have Consummated haven't.

Question: When spreading the Fa to Westerners, how should we handle questions related to religion?

Teacher: Show them the books, just have them read the books. I've explained things related to religion very clearly in the books. When asked, just answer according to what's in the books—do it that way and there won't be a problem.

Question: I suffer great pain when sitting in meditation. Is it a good thing, or is it because I have so much karma that I should suffer retribution like this?

Teacher: No, that's not the case. Nobody is free from pain when they meditate. Some of us used to do aerobics, were dancers, or could sit in the lotus position to begin with. Those people could do the lotus position with ease. But let me tell you, at that time you didn't cultivate. You'll feel pain soon after you start to cultivate. You definitely won't miss out on the exercise-induced karma elimination just because you can sit in the lotus position. If you cultivate, you need to have help improving yourself.

Question: When I rest my hands over my tummy while lying in bed, I can feel myself extending outwards like surging waves. I'm concerned whether this indicates that I'm practicing the wrong way.

Teacher: That's because you can feel your body being transformed from the submicroscopic level towards the surface. It's like what I said earlier: We're transforming you from the submicroscopic level towards the surface. So some sensitive people feel it. What you've felt is just a little bit. There's a lot more that you can't sense. Some of the sensations can be quite painful.

Question: I had many ordeals when I was young. Now that I've obtained the Fa, do those ordeals help with my cultivation?

Teacher: Some of them might be helpful. Since it's not easy for anyone to obtain the Fa, if a person is predestined to obtain the Fa, maybe he's endured hardships for this in many, many past lives. So don't think that it was easy for you to obtain the Fa today. Yet some people have endured hardships across many lifetimes just to obtain this Fa, and when the time comes to really obtain the Fa, they don't go for it. That's such a pity! They came just for this... don't you think it's a shame?

Question: When I first started learning the Fa and encountered danger in my dreams, I always remembered to call out Master's name. Yet recently I often forget to do that, and instead fight with them. Why is that?

Teacher: This situation is rare, very rare. But, there are truly exceptional cases. It will pass after a while. If you ignore it, it won't matter. Anyway, things will be fine after a while. If you call out for your master every time you run into a problem, isn't that another attachment? Besides, you should look inside yourself for the cause of things that happen in your dreams. They're a reflection of your being in a certain state. This situation often occurs in Dao system cultivation ways. It's particularly common in the types of systems where people practice both internal and external cultivation; that is, they do internal cultivation and martial arts.

Question: If a person who used to suffer from depression and had mental problems truly practices cultivation, can he reach Consummation?

Teacher: He can reach Consummation if he truly cultivates. But a person in this situation shouldn't do the exercises in public, both for his own sake and for the sake of the Fa. If he can't handle himself properly and causes damage to the Fa, he has done wrong. So it's best that he do the exercises at home. As long as you cultivate, I'll look after you wherever you do the exercises. But this only applies to people who are able to cultivate. That is, they must have a conscious mind and be able to overcome obstacles.

Question: Looking back at the early half of my life, I have regret and I blame myself. As a Falun disciple, how should I handle this problem?

Teacher: Don't worry about anything—let bygones be bygones. I only look at your heart for cultivation. Your Master will take care of the rest. If you keep thinking about things that happened before, it will become yet another obstacle and attachment. So don't be concerned about them anymore. Just change yourself fundamentally from the inside out, and you'll be a new person. That's what you should do. *(Applause)*

Question: Sometimes when I read Zhuan Falun I feel that my face is only a shell and that my inner face is doing the reading. Why is that?

Teacher: It's because your soul and the submicroscopic part of your body are dominating more. It's a good thing.

Question: How should we understand "xinxing" and "realm"? What's the relationship between the two?

Teacher: Whatever level you've reached in cultivation is the height of your *xinxing* and also your realm. Whatever thoughts and ideas are generated in that realm of mind will correspond to *xinxing* at that level. But that's not entirely the case when we do cultivation among everyday people. We're being transformed progressively from the submicroscopic level outward toward the surface. So while our human part still assumes a human appearance at the surface, we'll have an ordinary human's mindset until we eventually Consume, at which time everything will change. Nevertheless, we have to be strict with ourselves in our cultivation, and our *xinxing* must surpass that of an everyday person.

Question: If I do the Holding the Wheel exercise for two and a half hours in the morning and the meditation for two and a half hours at night, am I doing the exercises too much?

Teacher: I don't oppose it if you have time to do the exercises more. Performing the exercises is a good thing. But if you take time away from reading, then I'd say it's not right. That's because reading and studying Fa is priority number one, it ensures that you can be fundamentally and truly transformed, and it is the fundamental reason why you can go higher. Performing the exercises is a supplementary means to reaching Consummation. You shouldn't make doing the exercises your first priority and treat reading as secondary. You can't do that, absolutely not. And if you can't reach that realm, how is your practice going to get you anywhere? Although [the mechanisms] are automatic, you won't progress no matter how hard you try. When your *xinxing* reaches that level and you come to understand the Fa's principles by reading the book, your *gong* will shoot up instantly. That's why we haven't placed too much emphasis on increasing the duration of the exercises. But doing the exercises is still necessary.

Question: Master, you said that the subordinate soul of a person practicing in a certain system left the person's body to practice and then the subordinate soul was killed and reincarnated again. Was the master soul or the subordinate soul cultivating with that body?

Teacher: Let me tell you: I often say that you can easily see through this dimension of humankind, but it would be difficult for you to find out how many dimensions there are. [The subordinate soul] finished all of those things in the time-field of another dimension. Within the time-field of another dimension there are still other dimensions' time-fields. It was there that he completed everything. And of course it was the subordinate soul cultivating!

Question: Our translation group has translated your scriptures into English for some Western students to read.

Teacher: If you'd like to make public any translated materials, or publish and circulate them among other students, they must be reviewed by the Main Association for a decision. That's because a lot of issues can affect our Dafa as a whole and it involves things of great importance. So those materials must be reviewed by them. This is especially the case for the recordings of my Fa-lectures, as many things don't have general application after I talk about them. If they're to be published, I have to edit and organize them into book-like form for everyone to read. That way they can help students to cultivate and improve themselves. So nobody is allowed to [distribute things on their own]. I've made that clear. Though we intend to do good things for Dafa in everything we do, we still need to consider their effect on Dafa as a whole. So we should treat this matter seriously.

Question: In the article "Melt Into the Fa," Master said that we shouldn't spend a lot of time on discussions. Some people have interpreted this as meaning one shouldn't participate in group reading.

Teacher: You should do group reading and Fa-study in addition to your own reading and Fa-study. Both are necessary. Don't go from one extreme to another.

Question: I feel that some scriptures are more difficult to memorize than others. Is this just a false impression?

Teacher: Some of the things I've written are indeed not so easy to understand, for sure. They were written that way for a reason. To whatever degree you can understand them is fine. However you understand them, you won't go astray. The difference lies only in the depth of understanding.

Question: In order to memorize the scriptures, I've made a practice of writing them down from memory. What should I do with these written texts?

Teacher: When doing this sort of thing, one should maintain a cultivator's state of mind and be respectful of Teacher and the Fa. In this scenario you can burn them. The fire of ordinary human beings could never reach gods. So just burn them if they're no longer useful. You can do it that way since this is a special time in history. But Dafa books absolutely shouldn't be burned.

Question: Is it an attachment for a veteran disciple to always want to see Master? Is it yet another attachment if he can't hold back his tears and becomes speechless when he sees Master?

Teacher: Your desire to see me shouldn't have any attachments in it. But I think that the reason most of you want to see me is that you've practiced Dafa cultivation, and the Fa taught by your master has saved you. That's why you want to see me. As to why you become speechless once you see me, it's due to the changes in you and the transformation of your body. You can't see the changes at the surface. But the part of you that's been cultivated well, your soul, and your non-deluded part can see them. They perk up as soon as they see me. Even when they perk up just a little bit, your human part becomes really weak. The surface you doesn't know why that part of you cries. That other part of you sees everything that I've done for you, which you can't repay with any words or means. (*Applause*) Your crying is a reflection of your heartfelt gratitude that can't be expressed.

Question: I can endure the great pain from sitting in the lotus position. But other parts of my body jerk violently every now and then, which prevents me from entering into concentration when meditating.

Teacher: There will always be a period of pain when sitting in the lotus position. And that's especially so when some of you had never sat in that position before, and the material structure of your body at the surface isn't used to it, plus your karma is being dissolved, all of which makes it extremely painful. Even when you are able to sit in the lotus position for half an hour, you'll still feel a great deal of pain beyond the half-hour mark. Along with the pain comes uneasiness and anxiety. So although the monks who cultivated in the past seemed to only sit in meditation, they were improving their *xinxing* at the same time. It's just that their way of improving *xinxing* wasn't as direct as ours. So they progressed slowly, their cultivation was slow. When you feel uneasy and anxious, your karma is trying to make you take down your legs. If you're resolute, have strong willpower, and don't take your legs down, your mind is improving in the process. That's another way to improve yourself through hardship. Sometimes a person might feel an excruciating pain, become nauseous, or feel like vomiting. The reactions are strong at times.

Question: Some students think that we're already in the final, sprinting stage, and need to use all of our available time to study the Fa.

Teacher: I've never said anything about a "final, sprinting stage." If someone wants to spend all of his time studying the Fa and to resign from his job to stay at home, I'd say he is harming the Fa. Whoever spreads those ideas, whoever does that, is being irresponsible to both the Fa and himself. Who taught you to do things like resigning from work or even not working anymore? Wouldn't you be harming the Fa? I've said that humans, too, are fulfilling the Fa. Of course, some people wonder, "How can humans fulfill the Fa?" Think about it, everyone. The Fa can save you, and that's certain. So how can humans fulfill the Fa? At this level, the level of ordinary human society, if all of you were to behave badly, like everyday people, people would say, "Look at how those Falun Gong practitioners behave." If all of us do well, are able to hold ourselves to the standard for practitioners, and are upright and noble disciples doing cultivation—think about it—people will think, "Oh, they're Falun Gong practitioners. They're so good." If you can be trusted wherever you go and be a good person wherever you are, people will say that Falun Gong is really good and that this Dafa is really good. Then aren't you fulfilling Dafa in this form among everyday people? Doesn't that make sense? So if our own behavior doesn't conform to Dafa, not only can't we fulfill the Fa, but we are also tarnishing and harming the Fa. The Fa can save you, yet you harm it—how are you positioning these things? How are you evaluated? Cultivation is serious. How can a person who is enveloped by karma cultivate to Consummation if he doesn't take it seriously? Is there anything in this world greater or more serious than this?

Question: Some learned people aren't comfortable with reading Zhuan Falun. They're not used to the book's style, which is different from that of academic texts. Does this have anything to do with an individual's predestined relationship or karma?

Teacher: That's an obstacle to obtaining the Fa for learned people who are like that, so they have to overcome it. They're obstructed by their preconceived notions. Some people might disagree if I call the concepts formed in modern literature a new style of *bagu*.^{*} But they've really fixed the meanings of words and phrases by giving them definitions, so the words and phrases lose their deeper inner meanings. That's the case for today's vernacular, a plain and simple language. With its fixed definitions, it can only express the most superficial meanings and is far from adequate for

expressing the Fa. Some people say that Teacher's books don't conform to modern grammar. I fully agree. Indeed they aren't in keeping with modern grammar. But have you thought about this: The Fa has created living conditions and environments for beings at different levels, including the human languages and their writing systems. In other words, the culture humankind has today was created by the Fa. That being the case, how could the Dafa of the cosmos be restricted by the grammatical standards of a human language? We're merely utilizing human language and grammar to express the Fa. As for how to utilize it, that's up to us. I use it whatever way allows me to express the deeper meanings of the Fa. So I've completely broken the binds of modern grammar, and haven't followed its rules or norms. The same is true when I teach the Fa—I don't follow standardized language. Only this way can I express the Fa clearly. That's how it is. The Fa—the cosmos's Fa that is so immense—can't be confined to the grammar of human language. I'm merely utilizing human language. As to how I use it, I mold it however I want. As long as the Fa can be expressed, I mold it in whatever way allows for clear expression. And the Fa is creating new language and culture for the future humankind. Everything will be returned to its optimum state. So it's only natural that, at the moment, people aren't used to [how I use language].

Question: My leg was injured before, but I've managed to sit in the lotus position. Yet of late I can't sit like that no matter how hard I try. What's the reason?

Teacher: Actually, you should ask yourself what the reason is. Is it because you aren't being diligent with Fa-study? Or have you done something wrong but refuse to mend your ways, or haven't recognized the problem? If you handle things really well today and what you've done meets the standard of the Fa, for sure you'll be able to extend your lotus-position sitting to twenty minutes if before you could only manage ten minutes. Many of our students have experienced that. Things aren't absolute. The scenario [you described] could also occur if you need to eliminate a lot of karma during this time.

Question: I've received some messages. How can I discern whether they came from an Enlightened Being or from my own thoughts?

Teacher: Don't pay attention to any messages you receive. If you do, you'll form an attachment to them. Then they will try to disturb you, send you messages one way after another, and interfere with you. It's good that you have that ability and that it hasn't been locked. But you need to handle yourself well. Don't pay attention to whatever messages you receive. If you hear them or you see them, just let them be and don't pay attention to them. Just hold tight to Dafa cultivation. The principles have been written out in words—why would you still care about some messages? You will fall if you're deceived by a false message. It's that easy. So be on guard about this.

Question: If a being who was created in a high-level dimension falls down but cultivates back up again, is he different from how he originally was?

Teacher: The beings at high levels don't fall as easily as humans imagine. How could it be that simple? But that situation does exist. As for cultivating back up, that's even harder—it's by no means as simple as the few words you've written. Do you know how you managed to obtain the Fa? You had to reincarnate on Earth, you had to be born in the right period of time when the person who would save you was born, you needed an opportunity to come across the Great Enlightened Being who's saving people, and you had to manage to hear this Fa. It didn't come easily at all. And once you have truly obtained the Fa, you still have to manage to persist in cultivation. In the old days, some of Sakyamuni's disciples had doubts about the Dharma he taught. Some would listen to his teachings and then decide that day to take up the robe, but then when they got bored at night they'd cast off their robes and run off. That happened every now and then. Many years after the Buddha left the world, people increasingly realized that it was the truth, and began to treasure it. There's no difference if one can truly cultivate back up again.

Question: Please explain the specific inner meaning of "an exceptional person can reach Consummation by way of enlightening" and "When the truth is revealed."

Teacher: An exceptional person can reach Consummation by way of enlightening. Let me tell you this: Pretty much all of you sitting here depend on your enlightening. I don't show you the truth because I'm concerned that you might then form an attachment. So that's how it's done. If you can persist, carry on with your cultivation, and keep cultivating diligently and improving yourselves,

then I'd say you're truly amazing. Everyone will admire you when you've finally cultivated up to there in the future. It's called "reaching Consummation by way of enlightening." A person's cultivation will progress slowly if he sees everything displayed, including supernatural powers. And, if everything were really displayed, your cultivation wouldn't count. If I were to disclose even a bit of the maze, those who've come from very high levels couldn't return. So no matter which level you came from, we have to do it this way. It will be hard to cultivate after the truth is revealed, as the requirements for people will be very high, the cultivation form will be strict, and people won't progress as fast.

Question: Is breaking an egg considered killing?

Teacher: A person should cultivate nobly. I actually explained this principle to you quite clearly earlier on. You're living a human life. Maybe you don't eat meat, but maybe your family does. You are cultivating, but your family members might not be. We can cultivate while conforming to everyday people to the greatest extent. Focus on the main things and cultivate nobly, and you will handle these things with ease. It's just like if a person could become a Buddha through vegetarianism—that's a joke. [By not eating meat] a person is only abandoning one attachment. That is, he isn't attached to meat or a meat diet, which is only one attachment. But there are so many attachments that a person has to abandon. How could someone become a Buddha by giving up just one attachment? That's totally impossible. So we have, to allow you to cultivate normally among everyday people, in this regard opened the most convenient door. If you want to eat eggs you can do so while you're able to. But that doesn't apply to cultivating monks, nuns, and hermits.

Question: How can we more quickly get rid of the well-hidden attachments deep inside us?

Teacher: I'll point them out to you. My only concern is that you won't abandon them at the time. I'll definitely point them out to you. All of your attachments will be exposed for you. Even if I don't point them out to you myself, I'll have others do so. It could happen when you have a problem, during which an attachment of yours is struck. I'm only concerned that instead of thinking of those attachments, you'll look outside yourself for the cause. I will definitely point them out to you, you can count on it.

Question: As your disciple, I'm ready to go with you at any time. Will I be aware when the magnificent moment of Consummation arrives?

Teacher: Those who should Consume won't be left out. Just concentrate on cultivating and don't worry about anything else. I told you the story about the Arhat, right? A person can't Consume if he's afraid or overjoyed. So if you want to Consume at an even higher realm through cultivation, the requirements are even higher. Discard all of your attachments. If you have impure thoughts come forth at that moment, you will be pulled back and you really won't manage to Consume.

Question: Teacher has explained the Fa more and more explicitly. We don't need to enlighten to things anymore. Can this count as cultivation?

Teacher: Although you're sitting here and listening to what I've been saying, each of you definitely has a different understanding relative to your different levels. (*Applause*) It's just as I said: Although what I've told you are truths of levels so high, I'm still only telling you their surface meaning. You aren't allowed to know the real things. Even if you knew about them, it would still be hard for you to cultivate. I've only talked about the principles, I haven't displayed the truth to you. So you're still in the maze. There are both people who believe and people who doubt.

Question: Is it good for us to have group reading of Zhuan Falun three times a week without spending time on discussion?

Teacher: That's fine. What do you need so much time for to talk about? Read the book from cover to cover and use all of your time to study the Fa. (*Applause*) Of course, it's also necessary to find some time to discuss your experiences and understanding. You can share thoughts after doing your daily exercises.

Question: What difference does one's education level make in one's comprehension ability?

Teacher: It makes somewhat of a difference. If you're illiterate then you can't read the book. If you don't know all the words you will have a hard time reading the book. Modern people are shaped by modern science, so I have no choice but to incorporate modern science and modern culture when I explain things. If you don't understand the meaning of the terms, it will make a difference, and it will be harder for you to study [the Fa]. But you won't miss anything as long as your heart is in it.

Question: Romantic love has been troubling me. Whenever I have an argument with my boyfriend, I immediately feel like breaking up with him. Then I feel that I'm trying to avoid the problem. If we get back together, will that be an attachment to romantic love?

Teacher: Those are two separate things. Let me tell you this: Until you dissociate yourself from ordinary human society, until you Consummate, you will always have emotion. It's one way to ensure that you can cultivate in ordinary human society. And since you have emotions, your heart is going to be affected by them. What you can do is try your best to suppress them, and try your best to maintain yourself like a practitioner should, and not act like an everyday person who does whatever he feels like. At the very least you should be a good person, and this differentiates you from an everyday person. Then if you want to find a boyfriend or girlfriend and get married, of course you won't be affected. That's how those things are related. We've said that we should cultivate while conforming to the way of ordinary human society as much as possible. If you just don't want a boyfriend or girlfriend, and don't want to get married in this life, then that's a personal choice. If you don't want to get married, then don't. We won't force you to. In other words, that's how these things work. But as disciples, you must exercise self-control and act properly.

Question: When my friends ask about personal things, can I lie?

Teacher: If you don't want to tell them, then don't. Try not to say anything about them. All humans talk about is that stuff. Just handle it in a way that allows you to cultivate while conforming to the way of everyday people as much as possible and, at the same time, to meet the standard for a practitioner.

Question: Can one lie to avoid unnecessary trouble under the condition that nobody is harmed?

Teacher: Things are pretty complicated in the human world. And the problems created under different, complicated circumstances are extremely complex. But I can say to you, a cultivator does not lie. If you have to tell a lie to prevent a thing like murder or arson, then, well, it can't be said you were wrong. So as for how to strike the right balance, I don't think that's hard for a practitioner. Actually, there are lots of things we don't have to talk about if we don't want to.

Question: I've now done cultivation for a year, but still can't sit in the lotus position. The longer I can't do it, the more anxious I get.

Teacher: Don't worry. If you really can't sit in the lotus position, we won't forbid you to Consummate just because of that. But, being a cultivator, you should sit in the lotus position. Let me tell you—and this isn't a joke—if a cultivator has cultivated pretty well but can't sit in the lotus position, the Bodhisattvas above cover their mouths and laugh at him. It's true. But don't be anxious. It will come gradually. I've never said that time is running out.

Question: Why is it that when I do the exercises or study the Fa my lower back gets hot?

Teacher: During the course of cultivation, a person will experience all kinds of different states, tens of thousands of them, and all kinds of situations will come up. Could you still cultivate if you were to ask me about each and every one of them? Would you still be a cultivator? So don't be concerned about those things, just let things unfold naturally. A cultivator is bothered by neither heat nor cold. And wind can't make you sick.

Question: Is it predestined whether a husband and wife will have a good relationship?

Teacher: It's not something predestined, but it could be the result of karmic retribution or one's karma. In most cases marriage is the result of a predestined connection formed in the previous life. That holds for the majority of cases, but it's not set in stone.

Question: Can a Dafa practitioner worship Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara?

Teacher: Read the book. I won't answer your question. Many students have asked: "Teacher, why don't you come to our country? Why don't you come to our region?" It's not that I won't go. I'm waiting for your understanding of Fa to reach a certain level and for you to become more mature. Then I'll go. You will benefit more then. (*Applause*) If I went somewhere and you asked me what Falun Gong is, my trip would have been in vain, right? It's just like this question. Our time is tight. If instead of reading the book you want to ask me here about whether you can worship Avalokitesvara, then it's fruitless for me to teach you the Fa. Isn't that the truth?

Question: Teacher once said, "I am not within the Fa." How should we understand that?

Teacher: Why is it hard to understand? Can't I be outside the cosmos? (*Loud applause*)

Question: I was watching the stars one morning at about three o'clock. I saw them come towards me from far off in the sky until they were a few dozen yards away. I got nervous and then they disappeared.

Teacher: Viewed from another dimension, no object in this universe is fixed, and all objects' forms of existence are not how they are here. Also, the structure of that dimension's time field is totally different from that of our dimension. So you can't explain it with any of this dimension's concepts. It's good that you saw what you did.

Question: Some students made copies of Zhuan Falun (Volume II), printed them on their own, and circulated them at practice sites.

Teacher: We stopped printing *Zhuan Falun (Volume II)* because some of its contents touched a sore spot in Buddhism. So we've tried our best not to get into that. Anyway, we stopped printing it. It's fine if you've managed to get a copy for your own reading. But you can't print copies and pass them around or distribute them to others.

Question: I used to burn incense while playing the Chinese zither. Can I still do that?

Teacher: You can, as that's not part of cultivation. Burning incense while playing the Chinese zither is, like music, chess, calligraphy, or painting, a kind of cultured hobby from the ancient Chinese. I don't object to it. Yet as you raise your level in cultivation, you will gradually find that your ordinary human interests become weaker and weaker. But don't force anything on yourself at the moment.

Question: Some people think that less discussion and more Fa-study means reading Zhuan Falun and the other books aloud over and over again. I think that's a limited understanding.

Teacher: Actually, you should simply read the Fa more. It's fine to take a break when you're fatigued from reading and then talk about what you've learned. But I'll tell you, you shouldn't comment on whether the Fa is good or not. And don't waste so much time talking about yourselves. You should read the Fa a lot, read the book more. Isn't that right? A person is like a container, and he is what he contains. If he contains Fa, he has assimilated to the Fa; if he's filled with dirt, he is dirt.

Question: The fifth exercise takes a long time to complete. How should we keep track of the time?

Teacher: There's no set requirement. Do it according to your ability, there isn't any specific requirement. If you do all five exercises in a row it does take a long time. So if you can't do that yet, you can stop halfway through, rest a little, and then continue. But you need to hold yourself to a high standard and try your best to persist.

Question: The time for cultivation is tight. How should we properly allocate time for doing the exercises and studying the Fa?

Teacher: There's no specific ratio. [When I say that] the time for studying the Fa is tight, it's meant to encourage you to be diligent and keep making progress. I've never said anything about what will happen later. Just go study and cultivate. As to allocating time for exercises and Fa-study, it's sufficient if you study the Fa a lot and do the exercises in the morning or the evening. Some people get up in the middle of the night to do the tranquil exercise, and that's fine, too.

Question: Since doing the exercises at home or in groups achieves the same results, is it still necessary for us to drive an hour and a half to take part in weekly group exercises?

Teacher: Doing the exercises at home or outside has the same results. But unlike doing the exercises outside, when you do them at home you lack an external factor that compels you to do the exercises. For example, when everyone is sitting in the lotus position and you feel a lot of pain, you might see that nobody is taking their legs down, and so you'd be embarrassed to take yours down. That compels you then to extend the length of the exercise. [At a practice site,] everyone speaks and conducts himself according to Dafa, like a disciple. That environment of ours is most precious. No other environment in the world is so pure like ours. You can't get that at home. And people tend to be more lax at home. Sometimes they might do the exercises more, other times less; sometimes they might be diligent and make steady progress, other times they aren't diligent. They might be somewhat lax. If you can truly discipline yourself about cultivating, then the results are the same. But, since you do still have ordinary human thoughts and it's impossible for you to discipline yourself that well, I tell you to come out and do the exercises together.

Also, we've always talked about introducing the Fa to others so that more people can obtain the Fa. Has it occurred to you that the sight of a lot of us doing the exercises together is the best way to introduce the Fa to others? Why don't you go support it and fulfill it? Of course, for those of you who live far away and find it inconvenient to come, you can do the exercises at home. When there are more people later on, you can set up a practice site near your home. Then that would be more convenient.

I've answered all of the questions for you. Some people asked me to do the large mudras. (*Applause*) Your loud applause seems to be saying you want me to do them, right? All right. I'll perform a set of large mudras for you.

Glossary (provided by the translators)

<i>asura</i>	An ancient Indian term for "malevolent spirits"
<i>bagu</i>	a specific style of writing that is particularly restricted
Dafa	"The Great Law," or "The Great Way"; short for the practice's full name, Falun Dafa, "The Great Way of the Law Wheel"
<i>Dao</i>	1. Also known as "Tao," a Daoist term for "the Way of nature and the universe"; 2. An Enlightened being who has attained this Dao
Dharma	Sanskrit word for "Fa," used in the context of Buddhism
<i>Fa</i>	"Law" or "Way"
<i>gong</i>	cultivation energy
<i>qigong</i>	A general name for certain Chinese practices that cultivate the human body. <i>Qigong</i> has been immensely popular in China in recent decades.
Zhang Sanfeng	Daoist immortal, known as the creator of <i>taiji</i> (or "Tai-Chi")
<i>xinxing</i>	"mind-nature" (lit.), "character," or "thought"
<i>Shan</i>	"good," "kind," "compassion," "benevolence" (as in the <i>Shan</i> of <i>Zhen, Shan, Ren</i>)
<i>Zhen-Shan-Ren</i>	<i>Zhen</i> – true, real, truth; <i>Shan</i> – good, kind, compassion, benevolence; <i>Ren</i> – to endure, tolerate, forbear