

# A Brief Introduction to *the Buddha Speaks the Sutra of Visualizing the Buddha Infinite Life* (continued)

## 《佛說觀無量壽佛經》簡介（續）

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在《四帖疏》裏有一段很重要的文字。

娑婆化主，  
因其請故，  
即廣開淨土之要門

文中娑婆化主是釋迦牟尼佛，他因韋提希夫人的請求，廣開淨土的要門，甚麼是重要，必要的法門呢？

善導大師解釋說，往生極樂的行門很多，所以世尊特別把它歸納為兩門，一是令人專一其心

The key lines in the Commentaries on the Visualization Sutra in *Four Fascicles* say:

*The Teaching Host of the Saha World,  
Upon request,  
Revealed an important Dharma-door to the Pure Land.*

The Teaching Host refers to Shakyamuni Buddha, who, as an answer to Lady Vaidehi's request, widely opened the important Dharma-door to the Pure Land. What is this essential Dharma-door of great importance?

Great Master Shandao explained: As many practices lead to the Pure Land, Shakyamuni specifically categorized them into two group: Dharma-doors of Meditative Practice which help cultivators focus

的「定善門」，也就是十六觀的一到十三觀；二是止惡修善的「散善門」，也就是十六觀的後三觀。

再來：

安樂能人，  
顯彰別意之弘願。

文中安樂能人一一指的是阿彌陀佛，說他特別發願接引善惡凡夫到他的極樂淨土。

今乘二尊教，  
廣開淨土門。

是說現在釋迦牟尼佛教導觀佛三昧；而彌陀佛則教導一切凡夫念佛三昧。二位世尊，一位以觀佛三昧，一位以念佛三昧的方法，接引不同根機的眾生，一心迴願往生淨土。

接著大師又說：釋迦牟尼佛在此方一推，阿彌陀佛在彼國一拉。怎有不去的道理呢？這娑婆教主，和西方教主，一遣一喚，配合得天衣無縫！

說到教的大小，這部經是屬於大乘菩薩藏，由這個判教，使我們明白：淨土行人必須具備利他的菩薩心腸。所以才說，發菩提心是往生淨土的必要條件。再者，這部經是漸修，還是頓超呢？《觀無量壽佛經》裏說「是心作佛，是心是佛」，就是指我心本具佛性，念佛修行，即能作佛。豈不是最圓頓的法門嗎？

《四帖疏》第二是序分義。講述《觀無量壽佛經》的緣起。在這部經裏，佛陀宣說了兩次。

☞待續

their mind (referring to the first thirteen of the sixteen visualization methods)

Dharma-doors of Practice at ordinary time, which stop evils and cultivate goodness (referring to the the last three of the sixteen visualization methods.)

The verse continues:

*The able one who brings peace and happiness.  
Promulgates the great vows of exceptional meaning.*

The able one refers to Amitabha Buddha who has made special vows to take both good and evil ordinary beings to the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.

The verse continues:

*Through the teachings from the two Venerable Ones,  
The Pure Land Dharma-door is thrown wide open.*

Shakyamuni Buddha now teaches us the Samadhi of Visualizing the Buddha, while Amitabha Buddha taught all unenlightened beings the Samadhi of Reciting the Buddha's Name. One Buddha uses visualization while the other Buddha uses recitation practice to take beings of various propensities to the Pure Land with a singleminded resolve.

Master Shandao also said, "With Shakyamuni Buddha giving a push on this side, and Amitabha Buddha offering a pull on the other side, there's no reason to not get there. This is indeed a flawless synchronized effort between the lord of Saha World and sages of Western Pure Land!"

As for the scope of the teachings, this sutra is of the treasury of Mahayana Bodhisattvas. From this classification, we understand that resolving on bodhi is a requirement for rebirth in the Pureland. Next, would you regard this Sutra as gradual cultivation or sudden awakening?

The *Visualization Sutra* says, "The Buddha is created by the mind; the mind is just the Buddha." In other words, we are all endowed with the Buddha nature. If we practice being mindful of the Buddha, then we can become a Buddha. Isn't this the most perfect Dharma practice there is?

The second section of the *Four Fascicles* is the Introduction, which set the background for the *Visualization Sutra*. The Buddha taught this sutra twice.

☞To be continued