

Why do I have faith in Buddha? By Steve Wang

Many things described in Buddhist sutras can be proven consistent with the contributions of the progress of science and advanced technology. On the other hand, nothing can prove thousands of volumes of Buddhist sutras wrong so far. The sutras were written by Buddha's disciples 2500 years ago, and at that time human beings' knowledge was very limited.

Take the concept of the universe as an example. In Buddha's era, the Hubble Telescope had not been invented yet, and people's knowledge of the universe was virtually none. However, the Buddha taught His disciples the concept of the universe in *Dirgha Āgama Sutra, Volume 18* (長阿含經卷第十八), as follows: "Like a sun and a moon circle around and illuminate four worlds, one thousand of this kind of worlds are referred to as a Small Thousand World. A Small Thousand World has one thousand suns and one thousand moons, four thousand seas.....; One thousand Small Thousand Worlds are referred to as a Middle Thousand World; one thousand Middle Thousand Worlds are referred to as a Three Thousand Great Thousand World. Such worlds rise and fall, all the living beings reside within, are referred to as A Buddha land." (如一日月周行四天下，光明所照，如是千世界，千世界中

有千日月、、、、四千大海、、、，是為小千世界。如一小千世界，爾所小千千世界，是為中千世界。如一中千世界，爾所中千千世界，是為三千大千世界。如是世界周匝成敗，眾生所居名一佛剎。

。) According to Wikipedia: “a galaxy is a gravitationally bound system of stars, stellar remnants, interstellar dust, and dark matter.... Galaxies range in size from dwarfs with just a few billion (10^9) stars to giants with one hundred trillion (10^{14}) stars.... Approximately 200 billion (2.0×10^{11}) or, more recently, at least 2 trillion galaxies exist in the observable universe.”

The observable universe is only partial of the universe. Theoretically, the universe is borderless, and the number of galaxies should be countless as well. The universe discovered by the scientists matches with the concept of the universe described in the Buddhist sutra. This is clear evidence that Buddha’s profound wisdom and knowledge are way beyond ordinary men’s imagination.

Another example is the stages of human prenatal development. The Buddhist teaching has detailed descriptions of prenatal development from the first week to the thirty-eighth week, which are very close to the discoveries by the modern technologies. The descriptions of the development are recorded in Mahāratnakūta Sūtra Volume 55 (大寶積經卷第五十五), and some of the stages are cited as follows: “On the seventh week in maternal fetus, ... four

forms appear—two palms and two feet- they are as soft as condensed foams. On the eighth week in maternal fetus, twenty forms appear—ten fingers and ten toes. On the ninth week in maternal fetus,nine forms appear, what are those nine forms? two eyes, two ears, two nose holes, a mouth, a genital, and an anus.” (第七七日處母胎時，復感業風名為旋轉。由此風力四相出現，所謂手足掌縵之相，其相柔軟猶如聚沫。第八七日處母胎時，復感業風名為翻轉，由此風力二十相現，所謂手足二十指相而便出生。第九七日處母胎時，復感業風名為分散。由此風力現九種相。云何為九？所謂眼耳鼻口、大小便處名為九相。)

About two thousand years later, modern technologies have discovered similar stages (cited from Wikipedia) of human pregnancy: “week 7, location of the elbows and toes are visible; weeks 8-10, the fetus can make a fist with its fingers. Facial features continue to develop. Genitals appear well differentiated.” This is further evidence in support of Buddhist teachings being worthy of believing and learning; most importantly, they are in line with scientific findings.

I have encountered many different religions in my life in the past, such as: Catholicism, Christianity, Daoism, Falung Gong, etc. Each time I got introduced to a religion, I would study it with the hope that I could find the truth of life; however, none of them had enough convincing proof to support the idea that my life

would become better and better if I believed in it or practiced it. Then in 2013, I had the opportunity to learn about Buddhism and studied some sutras. Although I was very much interested in those sutras, I had lots of questions for which no one could provide me with satisfactory answers. A year later, I stumbled upon a book written by Venerable Xiao Pingshi and found the contents extremely valuable and easy to understand. Thus, immediately I joined the class held in Diamond Bar by The Cultivation Centers of the True Enlightenment Practitioners Association established by Venerable Pingshi. Since my education background was scientifically oriented — master's degree in mechanical engineering, I can never accept anything on blind faith, but can only believe in things that can be scientifically proven true. I have learned from the lessons that Buddhist teachings should be personally proven, realized, and attained. Ever since I joined the Association, my life has become meaningful, my health condition has much improved, and I've gained unshakable faith in Buddha, and that is the reason why I would like to share my personal experience with you all!

