

# 矽谷梵音

*Pure Sound From Silicon Valley*

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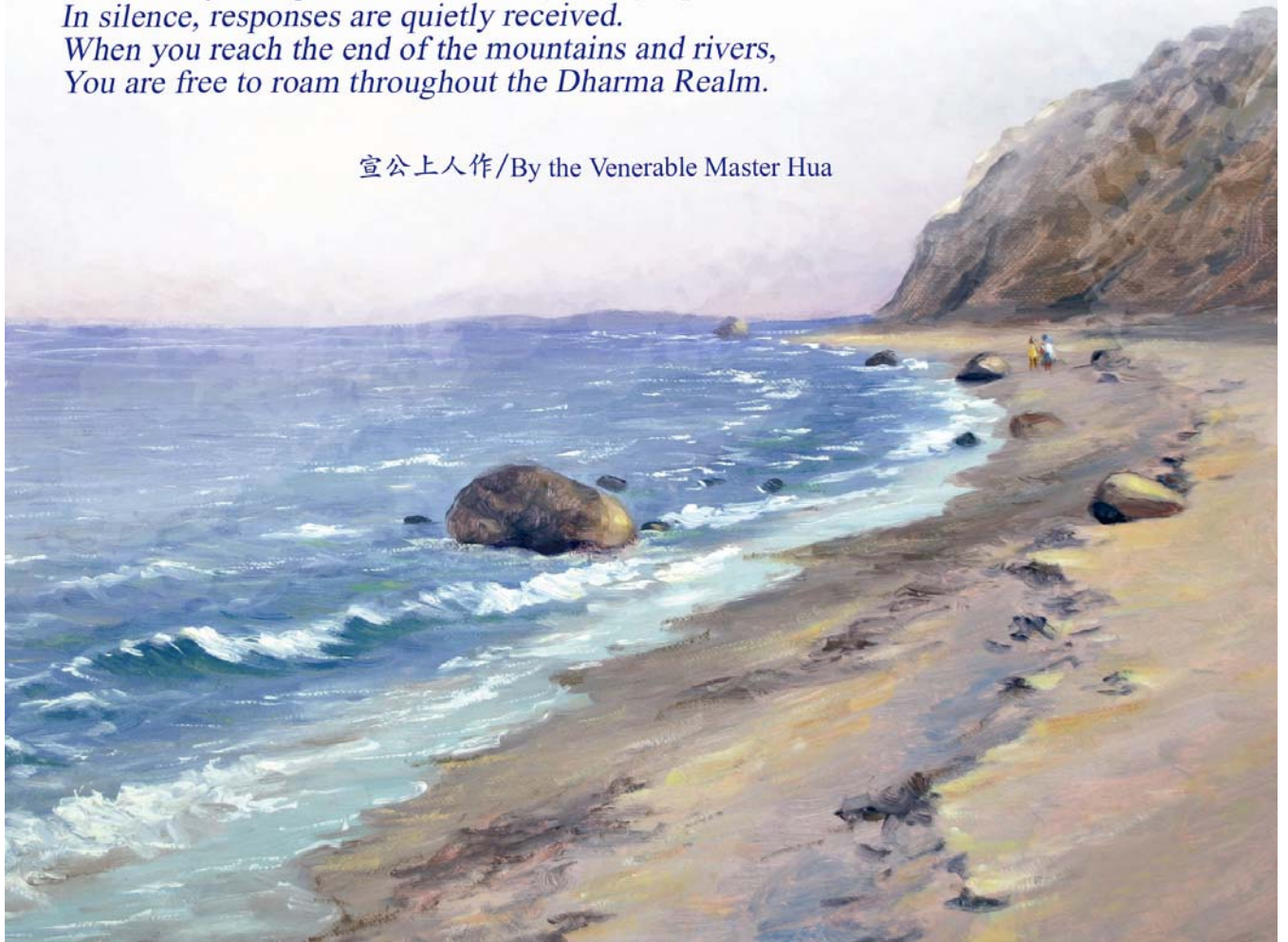


念念真誠念念通，默默感應默默中；  
直至山窮水盡處，逍遙法界任西東。

*When every thought is sincere, every thought penetrates;  
In silence, responses are quietly received.*

*When you reach the end of the mountains and rivers,  
You are free to roam throughout the Dharma Realm.*

宣公上人作/By the Venerable Master Hua



不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利、不妄語

No fighting, no greed, no seeking, no selfishness, no pursuing personal advantage, and no lying.

# 誰是觀自在菩薩

## *Who is the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At Ease?*

我們現在開始坐禪，就是觀一觀你自在不自在？你若自在了，那你就能照見五蘊皆空，也就是行深般若波羅蜜了！

***The Chan session has begun, have you contemplated whether or not you are at ease? If you are at ease, then you can illuminate the five skandhas, which means you are practicing profound prajna-paramita!***

宣公上人 開示 / By the Venerable Master Hua

### ◎人人都要觀自在

南無觀世音菩薩！「觀自在菩薩行深般若波羅蜜多時，照見五蘊皆空，度一切苦厄」。

今天是我们冬天坐禪班開始的一天，《妙法蓮華經》已經在禮拜二講圓滿，已結經了。今天在這個坐禪班開始的這一天，我在《心經》上提出來幾句講一講，這幾句是什麼呢？就講觀世音菩薩。觀世音菩薩證得耳根圓通，怎麼樣證得耳根圓通呢？他就能「反聞聞自性，性成無上道」。因為他能反聞聞自性，所以他才自在，才得到這觀自在。

所謂自在就是一種無人、無我、無眾生、無壽者的境

界。那麼說自在，在什麼地方？在什麼地方不自在？在聖人的地位上就是自在，在凡夫的地位上就不自在。為什麼在聖人的地位上就會自在？因為聖人是無人相、無我相、無眾生相、無壽者相，所以他能得到自在。凡夫為什麼沒有自在？因為凡夫又有人相、又有我相、又有眾生相，壽者相那更不用提了。學佛法的人學來學去，也是有人相，也是有我相，也是有眾生相，也是有壽者相。因為這四相不能空，所以始終得不到自在，你想要自在，一定要掃三心，飛四相。所謂掃三心，「過去心不可得」，為什麼不可得呢？已經過去了。過去就過去了，所以過去心不可得。「現在心不可

得」，為什麼不可得呢？說我現在就在這兒呢！可是現在你說這個是現在，這個又過去了。這個現在不存在，現在也是虛妄的。「未來心不可得」，怎麼說未來心不可得？還沒有來嘛！沒有來你想他幹什麼？所以這三心了不可得。

你能三心不可得，空四相，就是觀自在菩薩。我們現在打禪七做什麼呢？就是要觀自在呀！人人都要觀自在，說觀世音菩薩是觀自在菩薩，那是在《心經》上說的，不是的！你誰自在了誰就是觀自在；你誰不自在，誰就不是觀自在！這觀自在菩薩，沒有一定的名。所謂一切眾生都是觀自在，我們現在開始坐禪，就是觀一觀你自在不自在？你若

自在了，那你就照見五蘊皆空，也就是行深般若波羅蜜了！行深般若波羅蜜，才能照見五蘊皆空；你照見五蘊皆空，這才是行深般若波羅蜜。你能這樣子了，才能度一切苦厄，一切苦都了了，所以得到自在了。

### ◎ 老老實實觀自在！

那麼不但觀世音菩薩和我們是一個，十方諸佛、十方菩薩和我們都是一個的。不過，菩薩和我們是一個，可是我們呢，沒有和菩薩一個！這個話怎麼說？這也就好像那個窮子，在《法華經》上你們都記得有一個窮子，那個窮子孩子，他的父親非常有錢，但是他跑到外邊去了，把自己的父親也忘了，所以雖然他父親找著他，他也不知道這個大富長者就是他父親。爲什麼？因爲他離他父親太久，跑得太遠了。人家要遠離顛倒夢想，他要遠離父母，到外國去做一個乞食的人。我們不能和佛菩薩合二爲一，也就好像這個道理一樣——我們跑到外邊不認識父親、母親了！因爲我們和佛

菩薩都是一家人來著，所以才說一切眾生皆有佛性，皆堪作佛。那麼我們現在跑到外邊去做窮孩子，把自己本有的家也就忘了，把自己的父母也都不記得了。

我們的法身父母就是十方諸佛菩薩，我們現在坐禪做什麼呢？就是想要苦海無邊回頭是岸，要回過頭來，找著我們那個法身的父母，所以才成立這個九十八天的坐禪班。可是這個坐禪班在西方人根本就是見所未見，聞所未聞，所謂幾千年來，就沒有這樣子的認真修行，老老實實的要觀自在菩薩！

### ◎ 不怕辛苦觀自在

你要是在這九十八天的期間，不怕這種的辛苦——早晨從三點鐘就起身，晚間到十二點鐘才休息，每一天坐禪用功二十一個鐘頭。白天晚間共二十四個鐘頭，我們用了二十一個鐘頭坐禪，中間就剩三個鐘頭，可以隨便休息。

在今年更值得我歡喜的一件事，就是這幾位美國的比丘、比丘尼，都發心常坐不

臥，常常在禪堂裏來用功修行，就是晚間三個鐘頭睡覺的時間，也不回到房裏頭去睡覺，還是在禪堂裏用功打坐。在過去我參加打禪七的時候，每一分鐘我也是不空放過去。所以在香港，那位很長鬍子的長老——明觀和尚，他對你們講，說是我和他在一起，坐了七七四十九天。其實不是七七四十九天，我記得那是十個禪七，七十天。那麼他是個老修行，我是個老不修行，那麼我這個老不修行和這個老修行，就來「坐」一個比賽，可是老不修行和這個老修行一比賽，也是一樣的，沒有被他戰敗了。所以他對你們說和我白天晚間坐了七七四十九天，本來我忘了，就說這是假的。可是過了一個時候，我一想，是有這麼回事！所以我又說是真的。那麼果修就說：「這個無有定法，哦，我現在明白了！」你現在明白是個皮毛，那麼內容真實的意思你若明白，那才真是觀自在菩薩了。

### ◎ 度一切苦厄觀自在

那麼我們在這個禪七的開

始，人人都應該觀自在菩薩，人人都是觀自在菩薩，人人都應該行深般若波羅蜜多時，人人也都應該照見五蘊皆空，你應該把色受想行識這五蘊都照破了它，照空了它，照化了它！把它空無所空，連個空也沒有了，所空具無，連那個人空所空都沒有了，這時候湛然常寂。湛然常寂，這也就是度一切苦厄，沒有苦了，沒有苦這就可以得到自在。

因為你們西方人對自在的定義大約還沒有明白，所以也不知道什麼是自在。我今天給你們大概講一講這個自在，就是無人相。這不是說在吃東西的時候無人相：「你不要吃，你的東西都給我吃。」說這是無人相了，不是這個！

在做工作的時候，不是說佛經上講做工作無我相：「這個做工的時候是應該沒有我，若有我，我這一做工是很辛苦的，所以要無我相，你們做工

去，我不要做！」這個又是錯了。也不是說在鬥爭的時候沒有眾生相，說：「我鬥爭你們就是沒有鬥爭你們，因為沒有眾生相嘛！我有什麼可鬥爭的呢！」這又是錯了。在這個吃肉的時候，說：「這個肉應該吃的，為什麼？因為沒有眾生相嘛！我若不吃這個肉，牠活得很長的年齡，這不是壽者相了嘛！」這又是錯了。所謂無人相，是要你心裏沒有人見、我見，沒有眾生見，沒有壽者見。沒有這個見才沒有這個相，所以在沒有四相的這時候，也沒有我執了，也沒有法執了。連我執、法執都空了，你想不自在也不可能了，一定會自在！為什麼？你既然沒有人、我、眾生、壽者，也沒有一個我執，也沒有法執，這就真正自在，也是真正逍遙、真正快樂，也是真正得到真智慧了。

### *Everyone should contemplate at ease*

**Namo Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva!**  
**“When the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At Ease was practicing the profound *prajna-paramita*, he illuminated the five *skandhas* and saw that they are all empty, and he crossed beyond all suffering and difficulty.”**

Today is the first day of our winter Chan meditation session. I finished explaining the “*Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra*” on Tuesday, so on this first day of the Chan session I took a sentence from the “*Heart Sutra*” to explain to you. What is this sentence about? It is about Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva, who realized perfect penetration by means of the faculty of hearing. How was he able to do that? It is because he could “turn the hearing back to listen to his own nature, so his nature attained the unsurpassed Way.” That’s why he can be at ease, and be called the One Who Contemplates At Ease.

Being at ease is a state with no self, no others, no living beings, and no lifespan. So where are we at ease? Where are we not at ease? We are at ease when we are at the level of sages. When we are at the level of ordinary people, we are not at ease.

梵語禪那波羅蜜，此云靜慮細進參；山高水深無所畏，始知天外別有天。

*Dhyana Paramita is a Sanskrit term. Meaning still reflection and subtle investigation.*

*The mountains are lofty and the waters are deep, but there is nothing to fear;*

*One begins to know that beyond this world is another world.*

宣公上人作 / By the Venerable Master Hua

Why are we at ease at the level of sages? It is because sages are not attached to the marks of self, others, living beings, and a lifespan. Why aren't we at ease at the level of ordinary people? Because ordinary people still have the marks of self, others, living beings, and, of course, lifespan. Because these four marks aren't empty, we are never at ease. If you want to be at ease, you must sweep away the three minds (the mind of the past, present, and future) and let go of the four marks (the marks of self, others, living beings, and a lifespan).

Why is it that "the mind of the past cannot be attained"? Because the past is gone, you cannot attain it if it's gone. "The mind of the present cannot be attained." You ask, Why not? We're in the present right now! But as soon as you've said that, the present has already become the past. The present doesn't exist; it is false and empty. "The mind of the future cannot be attained," because the future isn't here yet! Why are you thinking about it if it's not here? So this is why the three minds cannot be attained.

If you realize that the three minds cannot be attained and are empty of the four marks, than that is the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At Ease. What are we doing now in the Chan session? Contemplating at ease! Everybody should contemplate at ease. If you say that Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva is the One Who Contemplates At Ease, and that the "Heart Sutra" says so, you've got it wrong! Whoever is at ease is the One Who Contemplates At Ease, and whoever is not at ease is not the One Who Contemplates At Ease! The Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At

Ease does not have a definite name. Why does it mean to say all living beings are the One Who Contemplates At Ease? Now the Chan meditation session is starting, and you should contemplate whether or not you are at ease. If you are at ease, then you can illuminate the five *skandhas* and see that they are all empty, which means you are practicing profound *prajna-paramita*! Only by practicing profound *prajna-paramita* can you illuminate the five *skandhas* and see that they are all empty. And only by doing this can you cross beyond all suffering and difficulty. When you've ended all suffering, you become at ease.

### ***Honestly contemplate at ease!***

Not only are we one with Guan Shi Yin, we are one with all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions. However, the Bodhisattvas are one with us while we are not one with the Bodhisattvas. What do I mean by that? It's like the penniless drifter in the "Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra" who was the son of a wealthy man. He ran away from home and forgot about his father, so even though his father kept looking for him, he never knew that this wealthy elder was his father. Why not? He didn't know because he left his father for too long and ran too far away. Others want to leave distorted dream thinking far behind, he wanted to leave his parents far behind to be a beggar in a foreign country. We cannot be one with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for the same reason – because we have run away and no longer recognize our fathers and mothers. All living beings have the Buddha-nature and can become

Buddhas, so we are one family with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. We have run away to be poor orphans outside and forgotten our original homes and parents.

Our Dharma-body parents are the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Ten Directions. What are we sitting in Chan meditation for? It is because "the sea of suffering is boundless, turn back to reach the shore." We are meditation to turn back and find the parents of our Dharma-bodies. That is why we have this ninety-eight day Chan meditation session. However, Chan meditation sessions are basically unheard of and unseen in the West. So for thousands of years, there has not been such honest cultivation to be the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At Ease.

### ***Contemplating at ease, unafraid of hardship***

During this period of ninety-eight days, do not be afraid of hardship. We wake up at three in the morning and go to rest at twelve at night. Every day we sit in Chan meditation for twenty-one hours. There are twenty-four hours in a day, and we use twenty-one hours to sit in Chan meditation. The three hours left in the middle can be used to rest.

What makes me most happy this year is that these American monks and nuns have chosen to sleep sitting up instead of lying down, and cultivate vigorously in the Chan hall. Even at night, during the three hours scheduled to sleep, they do not return to their rooms and stay in the Chan hall to meditate. In the past, when I participated in Chan sessions, I made use of every minute. So in Hong Kong, that elder with the long beard – Dharma Master

Ming Guan – told you that when he was with me, we sat for forty-nine days. Actually it wasn't forty-nine days; I remember that it was seventy days. He is an old cultivator and I am an old not-cultivator, so we "sat" in a contest. But when this old not-cultivator competed with the old cultivator, I didn't lose to him. So when he told you that he sat with me for forty-nine days straight, I had forgotten about it and said that it wasn't true. But after a while, I remembered that there really was such a thing! So then I said it was true. So Guo Xiu said, "Now I understand what 'There are no fixed Dharmas' means!" What you understand now is a tiny fraction of the whole, if you understood the true meaning, you would be the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At Ease.

***The One Who Contemplates At Ease crosses beyond all suffering and difficulty***

Now that the Chan session is starting, everybody should be contemplating the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates At Ease and everybody is the Bodhisattva Who Contemplate At Ease. When everybody is practicing the profound

*prajna-paramita*, everybody will illuminate the five *skandhas* and see that they are all empty. Illuminate the five *skandhas* of form, feeling, cognition, formation, and consciousness and smash them, see through them, transform them to the point where the emptiness doesn't even exist. Both the person and the emptiness are all depleted. When it happens, everything is completely still and crystal clear. This is to cross beyond all suffering and difficulty. When there is no more suffering, then you will be at ease.

Since you Westerners still haven't really understood the meaning of "at ease," you don't know what it is to be at ease. Today I am going to talk to you about being "at ease." It is to let go of the mark of others. I'm not talking about letting go of the mark of others when you are eating, "Don't eat your food; give it to me!" This is not what I mean by letting go of the mark of others!

When you are working, don't say that the sutras say to work without having the mark of self, "When we are working, the 'I' should not be present. This work must be tiring, so I should let go of the mark of self – I'll let the rest of

you go work, I'm not doing it!" This is wrong too. I am also not talking about fighting without having the mark of others, "When I am fighting with you I'm not actually fighting with you, because I let go of the mark of living beings! What is there for me to fight?" This is still wrong. When you are eating, "I should eat this meat. Why? Because there's no mark of living beings! If I don't eat this meat, the animal will live to a very long age, and that would be attaching to the mark of a lifespan!" This is wrong again. Letting go of the mark of others means that in your mind you have no views of self, others, living beings, and a lifespan. If you don't have these views than you won't be attached to these marks. So when you have let go of the four marks, you let go of your attachment to self and to all dharmas. When you see the self and all dharmas as empty, then you will certainly be at ease! You couldn't not be at ease even if you tried. Why is that? Because you are free of self, others, living beings, and a lifespan and are not attached to self and to dharmas. That is to be truly at ease, truly free, truly happy, and that is true wisdom.

菩提大道直又直 不可彎曲莫倖致 真心求法必感應 假意因循浪費時  
勇猛精進忍弗退 布施持戒修智宜 有日完成波羅蜜 十方諸佛會蓮池

*The Great Bodhi Way is straight as can be.  
Don't let yourself get sidetracked or try to find a shortcut.  
If you seek the Dharma with a true heart, there's sure to be a response.  
If you are insincere and negligent, you're just wasting time.  
Advance vigorously, be patient, and don't retreat!  
Practice giving, uphold the precepts, and cultivate wisdom.  
One day you will complete the journey to the other shore  
And join the Buddhas of the ten directions at the lotus pool.*

宣公上人作 / By the Venerable Master Hua

# 主人若迷 客得其便

*When the Host is Unconfused, the Demonic States are Powerless*

恒雲法師 / by Dharma Master Heng Yun

李海慈 英譯 / Lotus Lee



**談**到五十陰魔宣公上人說：

「你們看五十種陰魔，我告訴你們一個根本的idea（概念），你就根本拿它當太空小說看，要想入非非，要那麼想：這都是一種不是人所有的事情。所以你以為凡夫這麼樣子看啊、聽啊，那是不行，就不合了。不過這都是隱伏的，太空小說它不一定有的；這就要知道，用功的人的境界這些都有的；太空小說呢？用功不一定有的。」

大家聽到這裡會說：「不要修行了，好恐怖喔！」不是的，不是每個人都會經歷這種問題，有的人或許全部不經歷過，或許有的人經歷過比較多，這要看你的心怎麼樣？經典裡說「洗心非正」，這是說我們修行本來要清淨我們的心，但又不是真正的清淨，裡

面還有一些邪念、雜念，例如：一方面想修行，一方面又覺得有男朋友也不錯，或有女朋友也不錯。略似這樣，你的心還不是真正保持正念，這樣子的情況，就容易落於邪見，認賊為子。

我們是五陰之身，在修定的過程中身心產生變化，現出一些境界。若你認識境界，不作證果的想法，這本來不是什麼不好的事情，所以說「不作聖心，名善境界」。但是你若以為證了聖果，這就「易入群邪」，這時候你就很容易走錯路，受到群邪的包圍，就會墮落了。

不過，我們一般人也不要太擔心，正如上人說的：

「這種陰魔，其實不止五十種，五百種、五千種、五萬種、五十萬種都有。每一種又可以分出來十種；若細分析起來，千千萬萬種都

有。歸納起來什麼叫陰魔呢？本來是沒有什麼東西的，它就是一股陰氣。這股陰氣從什麼地方來的呢？也就是從我們每一個人的陰念來的。這股陰的念就是屬於貪、瞋、癡之類的念，所以就生出來色、受、想、行、識，那每一個蘊裏頭就生出來這種種的陰相。這種陰相是功夫到了，它必然現出一個情況。你若功夫不到，想有這個陰魔，也沒有的；你若到了，它就現出來。」

因為你若功夫不到，你還是一個窮人，想有這個陰魔，也沒有的；他要找富有的人，所以有時候還不到那個程度。不過，我覺得上人在講整個五十陰魔的時候，一直在強調一個重點——「一定要保持正念」。你要認識境界，任何時候要保持正念。上人提倡六大宗旨：不爭、不貪、不求、不私自、不自利、不打妄語，這

是一個成佛的根本，也是一個修行的根本；這特別是在我上看人所講的〈五十陰魔淺釋〉的時候，深深覺得上人教導我們要行六大宗旨是非常重要的。

例如在想陰的時候，經典上說：「**是善男子……三摩地中，心愛遊蕩，飛其精思，貪求經歷。**」因為這個善男子修行到那個境界，他的神識可以出去，就很喜歡出去玩。當他有貪求的心態時，天魔就「飛精附人」，派一個天的魔眷屬附到一個人身上，來誘惑這個善男子。這就是由一念「貪」所引起的，所以要「不貪」。

我們的本性跟十方諸佛是無二無別的，不過因無明妄想起了，就有我們這個五蘊之身，又叫五陰之身。「五陰」就像五座陰山，把我們圓滿光明的自性壓在山底了。「蘊」，這是有蘊結積聚的意思，積聚這些陰的貪瞋癡煩惱成一幻身，和我們的真心是相背，所以我們就不像諸佛菩薩一樣的清淨光明。

現在修行要返本還原，五蘊之身，在這修行的時候，就像煮熟開水時，上面有蒸氣，這也就是我們身心變化的時

候，陰氣浮上來，要轉成陽。如果你了解五十陰魔，知道這是在修行時身心發生變化，或是你本身的陰相（自心魔），或是外來的天魔鬼神，就不易被動搖，保持定力。就像我們煮開水時，絕對不會說蒸發上來的水氣是真的，知道它會飄浮過去的。

為什麼天魔鬼神要破壞人的修行呢？因為你修行，要返本還原，當你得到楞嚴大定的時候，大地六遍震動，這個魔王的宮殿也會隨著被震壞的，所以他很害怕、很憤怒的，就想找機會來破壞這個人的修行。

在佛陀「八相成道」裡有一個「降魔」，魔王派魔女要來破壞佛的修行。同樣的道理，不只佛修行是這樣，魔王也不希望世間上的人修行，因為這樣他的眷屬就少一個，魔王也要他的勢力。而且他也貪戀這些魔宮總總的享樂等，可是若一個人修行成功，就會破壞掉他的貪戀，所以他要來擾亂人的修行。

那麼佛陀就告訴我們說：「碰到這情形不要怕，魔畢竟是股陰氣，你自性是光明的，你要保持正念。」佛陀用一個

譬喻，就好像一塊很堅硬的冰，要用熱湯去溶它，熱湯碰到冰的時候，會有氣一直出來，那冰就會融化掉。那你也可以說，在修行時，身心產生變化的這些境界，像冰上的氣，冰消掉融化了，剩下的就是光明。所以經上說「成就破亂，由汝心中五陰主人」，天魔鬼神不能成就他們的破亂，成就破亂的是你心裏五陰的主人。因為你沒有保持正念，碰到境界，或許你害怕了，或許你歡喜了，或許你悲哀了；這種種都不對。

你要認識境界，保持定力，不要迷惑。你這個主人若是迷惑了，就是你被境界轉了，那麼客就得了方便。這主要是你這個主人不要迷惑，就像你在家裡，外面有人來搗亂，如果你定定的，這些客人沒有辦法的。像有一次上人開宗教會議的時候，有人在外面舉牌示威，那時上人很定的，一點都沒有慌張，還去說歡迎你們進來。後來那些人都回去換好的衣服，來參加世界聯誼會議。所以說如果主人（修行者）不迷惑，保持正念，定定的，搗亂的客人（境界）就束手無策。

When talking about the fifty skandha-demon states in the Shurangama Sutra, the Venerable Master said: *“As you look at the fifty kinds of skandha-demon states, let me give you a basic idea of what it is. Since this is not anything that ordinary people might encounter, some of you may think of it as science fiction. The truth is, if you are a true cultivator and work hard at your practice, you may encounter some of these states.”*

Perhaps when you hear this, you will think, “Let’s not cultivate! This is too scary!” This is not the correct attitude, because not everyone will come across these states. Some people might not encounter them at all, while others might encounter a bit more; it is all determined by your state of mind. There’s a phrase in the Sutra text that says: “the cleansing of your mind has not been proper.” It means that as cultivators, we want to purify our minds. However, we haven’t completely clean our minds, and some wrong thoughts still remain. For example, on the one hand you want to cultivate, but on the other hand, you think that having a boyfriend or girlfriend isn’t too bad either. In situations such as this, your mind is not upholding proper thoughts, and it would be easy for you to fall into the deviant paths, mistaking a thief for your child.

Our body and mind are made up of the five skandhas. In the process of cultivation some changes will occur in our body and mind, giving rise to some states. If you recognize these states for what they are, and do not think that you have realized fruition, you would be fine. That’s why in the text, it says:

“If he does not think he has become a sage, then this will be a good state.” But if you think that you have become a sage, then you will be vulnerable to demonic influences. At this point, it would be easy for you to go onto the wrong path, be surrounded by demons, and fall into the evil paths.

The Venerable Master further explained that *“Skandha-demons are not limited to fifty kinds; there may be five hundred, five thousand, fifty thousand, or even five hundred thousand kinds. Each kind can further be divided into ten kinds. If analyzed in detail, there are thousands upon tens of thousands of kinds. In general, what is a skandha-demon? Basically it’s nothing but a mass of yin energy, which comes from our yin thoughts. Yin thoughts include thoughts of greed, anger, and stupidity. They give rise to the skandhas of form, feeling, thought, formations, and consciousness; and in each of these skandhas, all kinds of yin phenomena are produced. These yin phenomena naturally appear when your skill reaches a certain level. If your skill hasn’t reached that level, then you won’t encounter these skandha-demons, even if you want to. They manifest only when your skill has reached that level.”*

In other words, if your skill has not reached a certain point, you are still considered as a “poor” person. Even if you want to encounter the skandha-demon, it will be impossible. The demons are looking for “rich” people, and you are not there yet. Therefore, we ordinary people should not be too worried. More importantly, I feel that when the Venerable Master was lecturing on the fifty skandha-demons, he repeatedly emphasized a key point—

“you must maintain proper thoughts.” You have to recognize the states and uphold correct thoughts at all times. The Venerable Master propagated the six great principles of no fighting, no greed, no seeking, no selfishness, no pursuing personal advantage, and no lying. These are basics for cultivation and for becoming a Buddha. The Venerable Master taught us that following the six great principles is very important. This feeling was especially strong when I was reading the explanation for the fifty skandha-demon states.

For example, on the thought skandha, the Sutra states, “This good person ... within Samadhi, his mind craves to roam about, so he lets his subtle thoughts fly out as he greedily seeks for adventure.” Because this good person’s cultivation has already reached this level, his spirit is able to exit his body, and he likes to go out and have fun. However, when he has these greedy thoughts, the demon king in the heavens would send one of his retinue to lure this person into a trap. Then, the demon will possess his body. This was all caused by a thought of greed. That’s why the Venerable Master said that we shouldn’t be greedy.

Our fundamental nature is no different from that of the Buddhas of the ten directions. But because we give rise to ignorance and false thoughts, the five skandhas appear. The five skandhas are like five dark mountains that have buried our true nature at their very bottom. “Skandha” means to gather and accumulate. It accumulates greed, hatred, delusion, and all afflictions and transforms them into an illusionary body, which covers our true nature.

That is why we are not like the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

The purpose of cultivation is to return to our true nature. But during the process, there will be changes in our body and mind. This change is similar to when we boil water, the liquid eventually changes into vapor. When negative energy surfaces, we should turn it into positive energy. If we can understand the fifty skandha-demon states are just a part of the change process, then whether we encounter internal or external demons, we will remain unmoved and will not be influenced by such states. Likewise, when the water is boiling, we will not say that the water vapor is solid. We know that it is gas and will just evaporate.

Why do the demons and the ghosts want to ruin the work of cultivators? It is because when we cultivate, we are returning to our true nature. When we attain the Shurangama Samadhi, the earth quakes in six ways, and the celestial demon palace will also be broken into pieces because of the quaking. Consequently, the demon king is very scared and angry, and is constantly looking for opportunities to ruin people's cultivation.

When the Buddha was going through the Eight Stages of Realizing Buddhahood, one of the stages is called "subduing the demon." The

demon king sent his daughters to destroy the Buddha's cultivation. For the same reason, the demon king is doing this not only to disturb the Buddha. Since the demon king wants to keep his power, he doesn't want the people in the world to cultivate either; because once a person cultivates, the demon king loses a potential ally. In addition, he is also greedy for the pleasures of a luxurious life. If a person succeeds in his or her cultivation, it will destroy his happiness. So, he wants to disturb people who are cultivating.

The Buddha told us: "When you encounter this kind of situation, do not be afraid. Ultimately, the demon is just a mass of negative energy. Your Buddha nature is shining and bright, you should maintain proper thoughts." The Buddha then used this example: an unenlightened mind it is like a solid block of ice. You have to use boiling water to melt it. When the boiling water touches the ice, the water vapor will rise, and the ice will melt. You can also say that when one is cultivating, all the states that rise from the changes of the body and mind are like the water vapor rising from the ice. After the ice has melted, what is left is purity. Therefore, the Shurangama Sutra states, "They can succeed in their destructiveness through your mind, which is the host of the five skandhas." It is not the demons from the heavens and the

ghosts that have succeeded in disrupting your cultivation. Rather, they are your impure and improper thoughts. Without proper thoughts, when you encounter a state, you may become afraid, happy, or sad; all of these reactions are all wrong.

You must recognize the states and maintain your stillness. Do not be confused by them. If you, the host, are confused, then you have been turned by the state. Then, the outsider will be able to take advantage of you. For example, if you are at home, and a person from outside comes in to disturb you, if you are calm and still, this person won't be able to do anything to you. One time, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas was holding a conference of world religions. There was a mob of people outside demonstrating and protesting. At that time, the Venerable Master was very calm. He even went outside to invite the protesters to come in and have something to drink, for it was a very hot day. In the end, many of the protesters went home to change into clean clothes, and came back to participate in the conference. This is an example of when the host (the cultivator) is unconfused, upholds proper thoughts, and is calm and still, the disturbing entity (the state) cannot disturb the host.

事事都好去，脾氣難化了。  
真能不生氣，就得無價寶。

*It is easy to let go of everything; but difficult to control one's temper.  
The ability to maintain a calm temperament is a priceless treasure.*

宣公上人作 / By the Venerable Master Hua



# 金聖寺 十，十一月份法會通告

## GOLD SAGE MONASTERY ANNOUNCEMENT OF DHARMA ASSEMBLIES

10 / 19, 26 (8:00 AM ~ 9:00 AM) 楞嚴咒法會 The Shurangama Mantra Recitation		
週日 Sunday	10 / 5	念佛共修法會 (8:15 AM ~ 4:00 PM) Dharma Assembly of Buddha Recitation
	10 / 12	敬老節 (9:00AM ~ 1:30 PM) Honoring Elders' Day
	10 / 19, 26	金光明經講座 (9:00 AM~11:00 AM) Lecture on The Sutra of Golden Light

十月份活動 Buddhist Events in Oct. 2008	日期 Date	地點
長青學佛班 Elders' Dharma Study Group	10/4 週六 2:00 PM ~ 4:30 PM	金聖寺 Gold Sage Monastery
觀世音菩薩出家法會 Celebration of Gwan Yin Bodhisattva's Leaving Home	10/17 週五 8:30 AM ~ 10:30 AM	
藥師佛聖誕法會 Celebration of Medicine Master buddha's Birthday	10/28 週二 8:30 AM ~ 10:30 AM	
大悲懺法會 Great Compassion Repentance	每日 1:00 pm	

十一月份活動 Buddhist Events in Nov. 2008	日期 Date	地點
長青學佛班 Elders' Dharma Study Group	11/1 週六 2:00 PM ~ 4:30 PM	金聖寺 Gold Sage Monastery
念佛共修法會 Dharma Assembly of Buddha Recitation	11 / 2 週日 8:15 AM ~ 4:00 PM	
金光明經講座 Lecture on The Sutra of Golden Light	11 / 9,16 週日 9:00 AM ~ 11:00 AM	
梁皇寶懺法會 The Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Liang	11 / 23~30 8:15 AM ~ 4:30 PM	
八關齋戒 Transmission Refuge with the Eight-fold Precepts	11 / 26 週三 7:00 AM	
大悲懺法會 Great Compassion Repentance	每日 1 pm (法會期間除外)	

金聖寺

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## 梁皇寶懺法會

金聖寺謹訂於十一月二十三日至十一月三十日舉行梁皇寶懺法會  
(早上八時十五分 至下午四時三十分)  
虔禮梁皇寶懺，懺悔業障，普利冥陽，離苦得樂。  
法會期間，並可設消災延壽及超薦牌位。

**八關齋戒：11月26日(星期三)早上七時**

Gold Sage Monastery will be conducting **The Jeweled Repentance of Emperor Liang**  
from November 23 to 30, 2008. (8:15am~4:30pm)

The faithful can thus repent their karmic obstacles, benefit the living and  
the underworld, leave suffering and attain bliss.

( Set up Plaques for Lengthening Life and for the Rebirth are available)

**Transmission Refuge with the Eight-fold Precepts: 7:00 am on November 26 (Wed.)**