



# 我的學佛因緣

## Learning Buddhism - Causes and Conditions

王麗淑 文 BY LUCY HUANG

劉峻松 英譯 ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY LOW CHOON SONG

「今天我去金聖寺，有一位法師告訴我下星期拜蓮花懺…」突然聽到一陣哈哈大笑。「不是蓮花懺，是梁皇寶懺。」朋友回應我。「蓮花」與「梁皇」音很類似，我只知道「蓮花」代表佛教，怎麼知道還有這麼多的名詞；也就跟著哈哈大笑，來掩飾自己的識淺。

六年前，有位朋友剛從外地搬來，心情欠佳，向我打聽何處有寺廟，她想去拜佛。曾聽朋友提起往Story Road山上行，有一家很大的寺廟，是萬佛聖城宣化上人的分支道場，心想那一定很靈驗。以前每當報刊上有宣公上人的消息，先生都會唸給我聽，告訴我有關宣公上人奇妙的傳聞。所以就向朋友打聽地點，當我一切準備就緒，那位失意的朋友卻不想去了，我只好隻身前往。心想：拜佛能保平安，可能也會發大財；所以就懷著一顆好奇且尋寶的心情毅然前往。

一早開車上山，看到「金聖寺」三字，心中一陣喜悅。走進辦公室，遇到一位法師，她看我面生，知道我是第一次來，很熱心的帶我四處參觀，向我介紹圖書館、展覽室，然後帶我到大佛殿，告訴我可以到裡面禮佛，中午和她們一起用齋；她就去忙其他的事了。

「禮佛」，對我是一個新名詞，要如何禮佛呢？我知道拜拜，可不會禮佛啊！望著這寬廣的佛殿，一排排整齊的拜墊，呆了幾分鐘後，只好出去找法師，向她請教如何

“I was at Gold Sage Monastery today and a Dharma Master told me that there would be a Lotus Repentance next week...” Suddenly, loud laughter rang out. “Not Lotus Repentance, it is the Emperor Liang Jeweled Repentance,” my friend corrected me. In Mandarin, the words “Emperor Liang” and “lotus” sound alike. I only knew that the lotus always represented Buddhism; how was I to know that there are so many terms?! I laughed along with my friend to cover up my ignorance.

Six years ago, a friend moved here from overseas and was feeling depressed. She enquired from me if there were any monasteries around as she would like to pay her respects to the Buddha. I once heard from friends about a big monastery up on Story Road. It is a branch of Master Hua's City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. I thought to myself that it must be very efficacious. In the past, whenever there were articles on Master Hua, my husband would read to me all his wondrous deeds. After I managed to find out the address and got everything ready, my depressed friend decided not to go. As such, I decided to go on my own. I thought to myself, paying respect to the Buddha could bring peace, security and possibly great riches! I came to Gold Sage Monastery with a curious and treasure-seeking mind.

Driving up the mountain early in the morning, my heart felt joy when I saw the three words “Gold Sage Monastery”. I met a Dharma Master when I entered the office, and as she did not find me familiar, she knew that it was my first time there. The Dharma Master kindly showed me around, introducing me to the library, the exhibition hall, and finally the Buddha Hall. She told me that I could bow to the Buddhas there as well as join them for a vegetarian lunch at noon. She then hurried off to attend to other tasks.

Bowing was new to me. How was I supposed to do it? I knew how to offer joss sticks, but not prostrations! As I glanced around the Buddha Hall, with its rows of neatly-arranged bowing cushions, I stood stumped for a few minutes before realizing I had better find a Dharma Master to seek advice on how to bow. I managed to find a Dharma Master.



禮佛？經她仔細的教導後，終於學會了。大佛殿又剩我一個，我想既已經會禮佛了，應該恭恭敬敬對佛、菩薩表示我的敬意，求祂們保佑我閤家平安；所以就選了最中間、最漂亮的位子，恭恭敬敬的行最敬禮。後來梁皇寶懺法會時，沒看到有人在那拜墊禮佛；經請教一位法友，方知那是宣公上人的位子，趕快向法師請罪。那一次梁皇寶懺法會共八天，我只缺席一天，朋友說「你很發心！」我不知道什麼是發心，只知道唱誦太吸引我了。這幾年曾蒙法師的慈悲接引，斷斷續續的在寺廟幫忙，和佛、菩薩結了法緣。

感謝法師們的指導，法友們的鼓勵，我開始接觸佛學，同時也讀誦經典，但是善根不足、對佛法認識太淺，心裡不斷起疑惑，對上人的開示，偶而也不能接受，總覺得做人本來就是要快快樂樂、輕輕鬆鬆，何以要如此多的規矩呢？直到兩年前拜讀了『金剛棒喝』，那是一本上人與弟子之間的答問錄；上人一針見血的回答，劑劑皆是強心劑，不隱瞞事實，不阿諛奉承。我幾乎是用一個晚上的時間，把它全部看完。我對上人由衷的景仰，他對眾生的悲心，從他簡潔的答話中源源流出，我深深體會到上人的苦口婆心，無非是要喚醒我們的自性，斷我們的無明，得到永恆的安樂，所以就到金聖寺祈求上人收我為弟子。不久之後，萬佛聖城舉行阿彌陀佛聖誕法會，在先生及友人陪同之下，我終於正式皈依為三寶弟子，法名「親淑」。

### 小啓

◎「處於十字路口的僧伽」，因為稿擠，下期刊出，請原諒！ 編輯部 敬告

◎Editor's note: Due to space limitations, the continuation of "Sangha at the Crossroads" will be published in the next issue.

After listening to her careful explanation, I managed to learn it. I was alone once more in the Buddha Hall. I thought to myself, since I have already learned how to bow, I should therefore bow sincerely to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to show my respect and to pray that they keep my family well and safe. With that in mind, I chose the most beautiful bowing cushion right in the middle of the Buddha Hall to respectfully do my prostrations.

Later, during the Emperor Liang Jeweled Repentance, I noticed that no one used that particular cushion. I asked a dharma friend and found out that it was reserved for Master Hua. I hurriedly sought forgiveness from the Dharma Master. At that time, the Emperor Liang Jeweled Repentance lasted for eight days, of which I had only missed one day. Friends commented that I was very *fa xin* (earnest in Mandarin). Nevertheless, I did not know what *fa xin* meant; I was merely deeply attracted to the melodious chanting. These few years, thanks to the compassionate guidance of many Dharma Masters, I have been helping out at the monastery from time to time and thus have created dharma causes and conditions with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Thanks to the Dharma Masters' guidance and to fellow cultivators' encouragement, I finally started learning Buddhism as well as reciting sutras. However, as my "good roots" were few and I only had a shallow understanding of Buddhism, doubts kept arising in my mind. There were teachings that I just could not accept. I had always felt that living is about leading a happy life and that we should just take things easy. Why bother with so many restrictions?

It was not until two years ago, after I read the book *Timely Vajra Blows*, that I became serious. This book contained a question-and-answer dialogue between Master Hua and his disciples. In it, Master Hua gave answers that were straight and to the point without any hindrances. Nothing was covered up or a cliché. There was no beating around the bush. Every single word was the truth. I literally finished the whole book in one night. His simple yet concise answers clearly reveal the Master's great compassion and vows; with heartfelt admiration, I deeply appreciate how his tireless teachings aim to awaken our own self-nature, to help us sever ignorance and attain nirvana.

That led me to request Master Hua to accept me as a disciple at Gold Sage Monastery. Not long after that, the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas held a Celebration of Amitabha Buddha's Birthday. Accompanied by my husband and friends, I finally became a disciple of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha – officially taking refuge in the Triple Jewel. My Dharma name is Chin Su.