



我在聖城的醒悟

My Wake-up Call from CTTB

雅摩若 文

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當今年一月來到萬佛聖城，我不能理解一個人如何能在如此寒冷的地方生活。雖然一月的聖城天氣無比寒冷，但是城裏的生活卻給了我溫暖的記憶，和一次很好的人生教訓，在此我希望能將它們分享給大家。其中我學到的第一件事，就是放下，清楚的說就是放下對孩子的牽掛。

我的兩個兒女13歲和16歲，他們是培德中學的學生。促成他們到培德中學讀書的是我的丈夫，而當時的我是反對他們來的。學期註冊的時候，我是非常不情願的陪著他們到萬佛聖城；一路上，我幾乎是心如刀割，因為我不希望孩子離開我，同時我的孩子也不願意留在城裏讀書，因為他們很想家。為此我哭了許多次，甚至有一次和女兒兩個人，在女生宿舍前的樹下相擁而泣。

其實在內心深處，我知道我們不是無緣無故來到萬佛聖城的。因為從開始辦簽證到最後買機票，背後就好像有一隻看不見的手推動著我們，這股力量使我們不得不到萬佛聖城來。當我們到達聖城時，我們殷情地被安頓在女眾寮房，同時令我非常感動的是在廚房工作的法師，她們不辭疲倦的為大眾準備食物。佛殿是我心靈的聖地，我經常跪在佛菩薩前，祈求他們指引我，因為我將離開我的孩子，獨自回到馬來西亞。

When I went to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB) in January this year [2006], I couldn't understand how one can survive in such a cold climate. However though the climate is extremely cold, the experience of living in CTTB leave warm memories and good lessons in life. I would like to share my experience and the lessons learnt. The first lesson was how to let go – specifically how to let go of my children.

My two children aged 13 and 16 had been accepted as students in the Developing Virtue Secondary School. The driving force behind this idea was my husband, while I was against it. When it was time to register for their first semester, I reluctantly accompanied them to CTTB. It was a heartrending experience to reach CTTB, as I was unable to let go and my children did not want to stay either because they would miss the family. I cried many tears and one time my daughter and I practically cried together under a tree just outside the girls' dormitory.

However at the back of my mind I knew we would not be in CTTB without a cause. It was as if an invisible hand was behind us at every stage of our application, right from procuring visas to the air tickets. We had set in motion something we could not stop. While in CTTB, I comfortably settled in the girls' dormitory with its warm hospitality, and developed fondness and great respect for the nuns in the kitchen who tirelessly prepared our food. The Buddha Hall was my sanctuary where I often knelt and asked all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for guidance in the impending event of returning to Malaysia without my children.

有一次，因為對孩子的執著令我非常痛苦，我在佛殿裏哭了起來。這時候，一個想法突然出現在我腦海裏：「你還要為你的孩子哭泣多久？過去生中，你曾經做過許多人的父母，你也曾流淚無數次，你為什麼就放不下這兩個呢？」當時這個想法，就像當頭棒喝似地把我敲醒，我感受到一股溫暖的攝受。從那時起，我覺得我可以看淡人生，同時也堅信宣公上人和佛菩薩會引導著我們，不令我們失落。

佛法的學習，是無處不在的。生活在聖城裏就好像有一雙溫柔的手，隨時引導著我們去體驗佛法；而我們所要做的，就是認識眼前的境界。我在任職的單位裏，常常要承受各方面的壓力：寫企劃、作專案、拚業績；但是在聖城的廚房裏，我從包雲吞、剝核桃、洗切蔬菜這些簡單的工作中，得到了平靜與安詳。因為當切菜時，就專心地切菜；洗菜時，就專心地洗菜；無論什麼工作，就是專心在當下。有一次我正在和幾位法師一起切菜，突然間有一種似曾相識的感覺湧上心頭。廚房裏除了切菜聲、爐火聲以外，沒有任何的聲音，只是一片的寧靜和和諧，這時腦海浮現一個念頭：「好熟悉的感覺！我以前就做過這個工作了，我曾經是這團體裏的一份子。這個地方，充滿了和諧與包容。」我只和法師們相處不到一個禮拜，但卻有一股極為熟悉的親切感。這些法師有來自中國大陸、臺灣以及越南，而我卻是一個不會說中文的馬來西亞人。

在萬佛聖城裏打任何妄想，幾乎都會立刻有感應。當我在聖城的時候，有一位老比丘尼往生了，我因此有機會去參加助念。當我進入唸佛堂時，發現裏面只有幾個人參加而已；等到下午五點半左右，就只剩下三個人：一位居士、一位比丘尼(老比丘尼的女兒)和我自己。這時，我打了一個很不好的妄想：「為什麼只有幾個人而已，其他人在哪？我要告訴我的先生，我們最好不要在萬佛聖城往生，因為沒有人會來為我們助念；還是往生在家鄉比較好，那裏會有許多的朋友和親人替我們辦後事。」這妄想剛一打完，境界立刻就出現了。在我的眼角邊，就像做夢似的看見

At one time when I was deeply afflicted with attachment towards my children and cried in the Buddha Hall, thoughts suddenly came telling me: *For how long are you going to cry for your children? You have been mothers and fathers to many children for many lifetimes, and you have cried many tears in the past, so why are you attached to these two?* That message really hit me and made me sober. I felt this warm feeling of acceptance. From that point in time, I felt lighter and have this strong faith that Venerable Master Hua and all compassionate Bodhisattvas will guide us and not fail us.

Lessons in the Dharma are everywhere, and in CTTB it is as if gentle hands are guiding us to experience the Dharma. We have to be aware of lessons that appear right in front of our eyes. At the workplace I am constantly pressured with planning, strategizing and meeting the expectations of the organization, but in CTTB, working in the kitchen I helped make dumplings, shell walnuts, wash and cut vegetables. In such simple tasks one finds peacefulness. When cutting the vegetables, one just cuts them, and that's it. When washing the vegetables, one just washes them and that's all there is to it. At one time while I was cutting vegetables with a few nuns, I suddenly had this feeling of *déjà vu*. In the silence observed while in the kitchen, broken only by the sounds of knives hitting the cutting board and the roaring fire coming from the stove, there was a feeling of quietness and complete harmony, and a thought appeared: *I have done this before. It all seems familiar. I have been with this group before, there is harmony and acceptance here.* I had met the nuns for less than a week, but there was this familiarity. Some of the nuns were from China, Taiwan, and Vietnam while I am a Malaysian who doesn't even speak Chinese.

The response to any false thoughts is almost immediate in CTTB. During my stay, an elder Bhikshuni passed away and I duly went for the Amitabha chanting session. Upon reaching the hall I realized there were very few people present. At around 5.30 p.m., there were only three of us, a layperson, a bhikshuni (who is the daughter of the deceased) and myself. A very unwholesome false thought appeared: *Why are there so few people around; where are all the others. I made up my mind to inform my husband that it would not be good if we died in CTTB; nobody would come to chant for us. It is better to die in our homeland where there are many friends and close family members around to chant Amitabha for us.* When that false thought arose, the response was almost immediate. In the corner of my eye, as if in a dream, I saw a huge opening on the wall of the hall, and beyond the opening, there was light and a vast expanse of land of indescribable beauty and complete purity. Then I saw an old Bhikshuni, who was rather hunched over, with her walking stick, walking nimbly and entering the opening into the land. I sensed that she was so happy walking and reaching home.



佛堂的牆上開了一個大洞，洞外充滿了光芒和一片偌大、莊嚴的淨土。接著一位老比丘尼彎著腰，拄著她的拐杖敏捷地走著，走進了洞裏的淨土。她看起來非常的開心，就像回到家似的。當她走進光芒中，她變成一位年輕的比丘尼，而且變得又高又大，幾乎是那淨土入口的一半。接著，這個景象就漸漸地消失不見了。

那時，我立刻對自己先前的惡念感到羞愧和後悔；然後，又生起了對阿彌陀佛的感恩和信心。我羞愧的是，我竟然對上人要「建立一萬尊活佛、活菩薩、活羅漢」願力的道場有懷疑。不僅如此，上人認為比起無量數的眾生，「一萬」不過是個不起眼的數目而已。我對自己有這樣的念頭，深受良心的責備。（後來我發現，法師們其實有來為老法師助念，只是因為去的時間不同，所以我沒遇到。）

在慚愧、懺悔之後，我的內心充滿平靜和信心。因為這個經驗，提升了我對佛法及阿彌陀佛的信心。過去，我總是被外在的形象、標記和數字影響；其實只要很簡單不斷地去實行、實行、再實行，這種腳踏實地的修行和累積的福德，正是促成這位老比丘尼往生淨土的資糧。

三個禮拜後我與孩子分手，獨自一人回到馬來西亞。在18個小時的飛行途中，我心裡一直默念阿彌陀佛；我知道自己雖然是一名佛教徒，但是我的心量還不夠寬闊，總是被執著和情感所困擾。這趟萬佛聖城之行，就像暮鼓晨鐘似的提醒了我曾經發過的願，同時也找到了心靈的慰藉，因為我知道萬佛聖城永遠是一個聖地，一個十方常住三寶永遠守護加持，讓一切眾生能安心修行的好地方。

When she entered into the opening of light, she transformed into a youthful Bhikshuni so huge in size that she filled half of the entrance to the land. The image then slowly receded.

Almost immediately I felt ashamed and remorseful for my false thoughts, and then I felt joy and faith in Amitabha. I was ashamed for having doubts in a place set up by Master Hua, who *intended to create 10,000 live Buddhas, live Bodhisattvas and live Arhats at CTTB. The Master felt even 10,000 was an insignificant number compared to the infinite number of living beings.* I felt remorse for having such unwholesome and false thoughts. (I found out later that the nuns had been chanting for the Bhikshuni, but I had gone at a different time and so I did not meet them).

My remorseful feelings were succeeded by a warm feeling of peace and faith. This experience uplifted my fledgling faith in the Dharma and Amitabha. I was very caught up with forms, labels and numbers, when actually it's all a matter of practice, practice and practice. The practice and virtue of the elder Bhikshuni has ensured her a place in a Land of Bliss.

I returned to Malaysia after three weeks, without my children. I chanted Amitabha throughout the 18-hour flight. I realized that though I have been a Buddhist all my life, my mind is so small and constantly afflicted with attachments and emotions. The trip to CTTB was a wake-up call, reminding me of the vows that I have made, and filling me with warm comfort that there is always a sanctuary, a place for practice where support and kindness is ever present from all the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Sangha members.

