

放下屠槍 (續)



Throwing Guns Away (Continued)

果銳居士 2008年5月8日及9日講於萬佛聖城大殿
SPOKEN BY GWO RUI ON MAY 8 & 9, 2008 IN THE BUDDHA HALL AT THE CTTB
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說完這個槍的事情以後，上人又說：「你們皈依我以後，就不能再想去做不好的事情了，不可以去做那些殺人放火、種種不合法的事情了。」我們聽了都很驚奇：「喔！為什麼師父跟我們講這個呢？奇怪了！」我也不知道上人怎麼會講這句話？當時連我都不知道有人帶槍而上人為什麼會知道？我的心裏有個疑團，覺得：「咦！上人好像看透我們似的。」後來我才明白。我們當時都說好、好，口裏都答應了，這樣子我們就皈依了。我沒有告訴他，我們是哪兒來的，皈依完我們就回去了。師父後來問胡果相：「妳哪來的那麼大膽？去跟那些人講話，要他們皈依。」

我要先講一點小故事，因為如果不講，大家會不明白上人為什麼會問我有沒有槍？我以前年輕的時候，在三藩市的中國城認識很多黑道上的朋友，那時很多幫派在中國城；但是我不是他們的大哥，我不是黑道上的頭，不

要怕，我只是認識一些黑道上的朋友而已！

那時候在金龍血案發生還沒有多久——大概一年多吧？做金龍血案的那一幫人我也認識，他們年紀都很輕。那時候上人問我：「那些事情是誰幹的啊？」我說：「我認識他們，但是和我沒有直接的瓜葛。」上人說：「哦？你以後就不要跟他們來往了！」我說：「不跟他們來往？好啊！」我口頭上說，但心裏卻沒有真的說好，當時就打了妄語。

回到三藩市以後，上人吩咐我們說：「你們就都要把槍全部掉（編按：即「丟」，這是上人之習慣用語）到金門橋去！」唉！這個就不行了！我說：「師父，我們把槍掉了，人家會殺我們的！怎麼辦呢？」上人說：「不會的，你把槍掉了！」「我想一想吧！」那時只是敷衍一下，並沒有立刻答應師父。

我們皈依是一九七八年，大概七六年還是七七年那段日子，

After asking about the guns, Venerable Master continued to say, "After taking refuge with me, you shall no longer engage in crimes such as killing people, committing arson or any other illegal activities. Having heard this instruction, we felt very surprised, "Oh! Why did Shr-Fu tell us this. It's strange!" I did not know why the Venerable Master said this, either. He knew something I didn't know - one of us had brought a gun. I was wondering, "Well, it seems like the Venerable Master can see through us." It was not until later that I understood why. At that time, we all promised verbally and that was how we took refuge. I didn't tell anyone where we came from. After taking refuge, we returned home. Shr Fu asked Guo Xiang (Helen Woo) later, "Where did you get the guts to talk to those people and ask them to take refuge?"

I would like to tell a little story first. If I don't talk about this first, people will not understand why the Venerable Master asked us if we had guns. When I was young, I knew many friends from the underworld, which was divided into many gangs in Chinatown. They were really something. However, I was not their leader. So, there is no need to be afraid. I only knew them as friends.

At the time, the Golden Dragon murder case had just taken place about one year earlier. I happened to know the gangsters who committed this crime. There were all very young. The Venerable Master asked me, "Who did it?" I replied, "I know the murderers but I was not directly involved in this case." "Oh?" The Venerable Master then said, "You shouldn't have any contact with them anymore!" I said, "I shouldn't be friends with them? OK!" I promised the Master with my mouth

but not with my heart. So, I told an outright lie.

After returning to San Francisco, the Venerable Master instructed us: “You need to throw all your guns off the Golden Gate Bridge!” I said, “Well, I cannot promise this one. If I throw my guns away, people will kill us. What should I do?” Master said, “What you worry about will not happen. Just throw your guns away.” “Okay. I’ll think about it!” I just gave a perfunctory answer and did not really promise Shr Fu.

We took refuge in 1978. After the Golden Dragon murder case in 1976 or 1977, Chinatown was really chaotic like a ghosttown. Many gangs were fighting for their turf. I did not forget Shr Fu’s second instruction, “There is so much chaos in Chinatown. You shouldn’t really fool around with those people anymore! You should leave there; don’t go to Chinatown to make things so chaotic anymore!” I said, “Shr Fu, I am not the only one who messes things up. Chinatown is so huge. How can I alone mess things up? There are several gangs contributing to the chaos. It’s got nothing to do with me! If I don’t show up, someone else will.” Shr Fu said, “I would like you to leave there. If you get out of there, Chinatown will go back to its peaceful days. I guarantee it!” I said, “Leave? We don’t have that many people. Fine, we can leave but I have to consult my people first!” On these two requests, I didn’t promise the Venerable Master right away. I just said something to get through the conversation.

Later on, I consulted my group, “Who is willing to throw their guns away?” “Throw our guns away?! What if people shoot at us?” They asked me the same thing. I went back to Gold Mountain Monastery and the

Venerable Master wasn’t there at the time but Dharma Masters Heng Guan and Heng Shun were. I said, “If we throw the guns away, what should we do when people shoot at us? We will have no guns to protect ourselves!” We got our answer the second day. What was the answer? The Dharma Master related it to us, “The Venerable Master said, if people shoot at you, just recite Bodhisattva Guan Shi Yin’s name. Then, those people will not be able to touch you.” “What if I run into people?” “Recite Bodhisattva Guan Shi Yin and then you will be invisible to them.” This caught my interest. “Cool, I can learn some dharma skills, which will make me invisible. Then I will not need a gun. And we will be even more powerful when we show up in Chinatown.” The Dharma Master said, “It will only become effective after you throw your guns away!” “Oh, okay, we will throw our guns away then!” I was still thinking whether I should throw away the guns or not. After we talked about it, we decided to throw all our guns off the Golden Gate Bridge. I don’t know if we can still locate these guns or not now. This is a little story.

Actually, what we were concerned about really happened. I did not personally encounter any gun shooting but a friend of mine did while he was driving. However, he wasn’t shot. I think it was Venerable Master’s dharma power that had subdued us. From then on, Chinatown really went back to its peaceful days. Because we left there, everyone got their life back. I didn’t know what danger was. Now thinking back, I know we were in very dangerous situations. The Venerable Master saved all of our lives. During that period of time, I would sometimes go and take a look around Gold

Mountain Monastery, hoping to learn that dharma skill which would make us invisible. My purpose in reciting sutras there was to gain the skill to become invisible. This was what attracted me to Gold Mountain Monastery, which was still on 15th street at the time.

While the Venerable Master was leading a Dharma delegation tour to Malaysia and Singapore in 1978, all of us dreamed the Master came to rub the crown of our head on the same night. The monastics got up at 3:30 in the morning but we usually went to sleep at 3:00 a.m. Just when we were falling asleep, we dreamed about the Master. For some reason in the dream, I had the sense to bow to the Master, who extended his hand and touched the top of my head. The next day, I told others about my dream. They said they also had the same dream. They told me, “Shr Fu came to me. He rubbed the crown of my head!” We went to Gold Mountain Monastery and told the Dharma Masters what happened. We didn’t really know the significance of “rubbing the crown of the head”. We learned later what it actually meant. The Venerable Master was very compassionate and knew that we couldn’t take this new lifestyle. So, he came to bless us and help us subdue our bad tempers and ill habits so that we would not explode.

After taking refuge, we wanted to live a new life; however, it was not easy. We did not have much ability to turn our life around completely. We even had to change how we lived - our daily habits: learning to sleep early and get up early to work. Some went back to school and I started looking for a job. We frequently went to Gold Mountain Monastery and started listening to Shr Fu’s lectures and tapes.

Those of us who found jobs

worked; those who went back to school studied. We lived like this for quite some time. We had, in the past, contacted many people and wished to acquire some ammunition and weapons; however, the price was not well negotiated and there were no good dealers. All of a sudden, during that initial period of our new life, several dealers contacted us and gave us really good prices and deals – we were almost tempted. In the past, we would have certainly acquired the weapons. But later, we all decided, “Since we have abandoned our guns already, what is the use of getting all these weapons?” As a result, we did not take the offers or buy any weapon. Another example was that the gambling house also gave us many offers so that we could make some money. Some other people also contacted us but we didn’t take their offers – because we were determined to live a new life.

It is worth mentioning that the second year after we took refuge, we got involved in volunteer work. I heard that CTTB was going to build a mountain gate and thought to myself, “I could do some volunteer work.” However, I didn’t know how to do those things. I told Shr Fu about it. He just said, “You will know how once you get there!” So, we went up to CTTB and did volunteer work.

Let me tell you: I was very young back then and did not even know how to saw a piece of wood. At the time, Bob Olson (Guo Fa) was responsible for that project. He told me to go up to the gate and make a wooden frame first. I went up there to look at the blueprint as he explained how to do the frame. But, I was totally confused since I didn’t even know how to saw a piece of wood. When I just started, I would have to saw a piece of wood four or five times and even then, I was not

發生金龍血案以後，中國城就像ghost town（鬼城），很多幫派的人都在爭地盤，是最亂的那段日子。我一直忘不了師父當時第二件事情的吩咐：「中國城這麼亂，你以後不要在中國城跟他們胡混了！你應該退出了吧？不要再到中國城去了，搞得那麼亂！」我說：「師父，這不是我一個人的事情，中國城這麼大一個地方，我一個人怎麼會弄到他們亂呢？幾幫人在那兒亂，不關我的事！我不出來，他們也會有人出來的！」師父說：「我要你退出，你要是退出了，中國城就可以平靜了，我擔保！」「我退出？我們人很少？退出就退出，沒關係！不過我要跟他們商量一下！」兩件事情我都沒有立刻地答應，都是敷衍敷衍一下。

後來我跟認識的人商量一下，我說：「誰願意把槍掉了？」「哦！把槍掉了，他們開槍打我怎麼辦呀？」他們也都是這麼問我。我就回到金山寺去，那時候上人沒有在金山寺，只有恒觀法師、恒順法師兩位在那兒。我說：「我們把槍掉了，他們打我們怎麼辦呀？我們沒有槍保護自己了！」第二天我們得到答案，法師轉述說：「上人說，別人打你，你就念觀音菩薩嘛！他就打不到你。」「我碰到人家的時候怎麼辦呢？」「你念觀音菩薩，就有隱身術，他們就看不到你了。」哦！這個我有興趣了：「喔！有法術可以學啊？可以隱身，槍就不須要了！那我們以後到中國城去就更厲害囉！」法師說：「要把槍掉了，才會靈！」「喔？那就把槍掉了吧！」心裏還在想要不要把槍掉

了？後來我們回來商量的，以後就把所有的槍都掉到金門橋去，現在不知道還找不找得到？這是一小小的公案。

其實，那時候我們顧慮的事情真的發生了！我自己沒有遇到，我的朋友開車的時候受到機關槍掃射，但是沒有被打到。這是上人的法力把我們降伏了！從那時開始，中國城也真的平靜了。可能就是因為這樣退出，大家都撿回一條命；那時不知危險，現在想起來才知道，我們在非常非常危險的時候，是上人救了我們所有的人。在那段時間，我有時也到金山寺去看看，去學法術！我去念經，一直想得到這個隱身術。也就是這個因緣，把我帶到金山寺去，那時金山寺還在三藩市十五街很舊的那個地區。

一九七八年上人去馬來西亞、新加坡弘法的時候，同一個晚上，我們都夢見上人來給我們摩頂。那時不是像出家人清早三點半起床，我們是三點鐘才睡覺。我們剛剛睡著，就夢見老和尚來。在夢裏，上人來的時候，我不知道怎麼搞的，就知道給上人頂禮；上人伸出一隻手在我頭頂上摸著。第二天我起來，跟旁人講說我夢見老和尚；也有其他人在那天同時也夢見了，他們也告訴我：「師父有來哦，在夢裏給我摸頭呀！」我們就到金山寺那兒講給法師聽。那時我們不知道是「摩頂」，後來我們才知道這個名詞。師父很慈悲，知道我們那時候受不了，就給我們加持加持，把我們壞的脾氣、壞的習慣壓一壓，才沒有爆發出來。

皈依了以後，我們想開始過新的生活。那時也不簡單，我們過新生活也沒有什麼大的能力，爲了要完完全全地turn around（轉變

過來)，連日常生活習慣我們都要改；學習開始早一點睡覺，早一點起來做工去，有的去念書，我也開始找工作做。我們那時常常到金山寺去，也開始晚上聽師父講的錄音帶、講經。

我們工作的工作，讀書的讀書，這樣過了一段日子。因為我們以前就聯絡了很多，想買一點軍火武器；但是價錢都沒談好，也沒有什麼好的行家出來。突然間，在那段日子有幾個行家就跟我們聯絡，價錢非常好，條件也非常好，差不多要令我們很動心了；若在以前，我們是一定要要的。後來我們都決定：「我們都把槍給掉了，再買來幹麼呢？」所以我們就沒有答應，也沒有再去買了。譬如說那個 gambling house（賭場），也給我們很多 offer（好處利益），也可以賺一點錢，我們也沒有接受，決定過新的生活。

皈依以後那段日子，另一件值得一提的，就是我們做工的事。在皈依以後的第二年吧？我聽說就要蓋山門了，那時就想：我也可以去做義工。但是不會做那些事情，我跟師父講；師父就說：「你去了，自然就會了！」所以我們就到萬佛城開始做工。

我跟各位講，那時候我很年輕，鋸一根木頭都不會。那時的果法居士 Bob Olson 負責做工的事，我跟著他做。他叫我到上面去，把木框架做一做；我就跑到上面，看著圖，他解釋怎麼樣做。但是我一頭霧水，一根木頭都不會鋸；開始做的時候，我一根木頭鋸四次、五次都還沒鋸成，就這麼搞的！那時果法真的很有耐心教我，就繼續做吧！第二天、第三天，漸漸就開始上手了，好像比第一天好一點。

本來那個做木工的，人家一鋸就好了，我們就四鋸、五鋸的，鋸得木頭都不成樣子了！後來我們就開始慢慢地把牌樓中間那個木架子給做出來了。

那個時候師父大概一個禮拜上來一次，每個人都希望看見師父。那時整天都在想：「師父什麼時候要來？」我們若知道師父要來，哦！整天的勞累都沒有了，做工也都變得很輕鬆了：「喔！師父要來囉！」那天特別有精神，做得特別起勁，第一個木框就這麼樣做出來的。我在那兒慢慢地邊做邊想，邊做邊想，不知道怎麼樣就把它搞出來了！那時來法師笑我，他走到屋頂上說：「喔！你現在是木匠師了吧！」我說：「我弄得這麼糟的，會像木匠師嗎？」真的很慚愧，我真的是不懂，亂做出來的！你看現在這個山門，那時候就是這麼慢慢、慢慢地學出來的，幸好有果法他們耐心地帶著我們做。這是我在萬佛聖城做這個山門的事情。以後，我們有時回三藩市去，也在外面做一點工作，就這樣過了一段日子。

回想當年，其實以前我們也不是那麼樣的壞，就是頑皮貪玩，又認識很多朋友，喜歡跟他們去胡混，不懂得怎麼樣在社會上守規矩。現在想起來，在那個時候，是有一段時間墮落了；幸虧上人把我給救回來的，所以我這三十年來都沒有離開萬佛城！

✎待續

successful. I had no clue about what I was doing. Guo Fa was very patient in teaching me, so I continued on. After a few days, I started to get the hang of it. It was better than the first day because I didn't have to saw three or four times when I needed a piece of

wood. When carpenters saw wood, it only takes them one try and they are done. For me, it took four or five tries until the wood was not really wood anymore. Slowly, the wooden frame was built for the middle arch.

Back then, Shr Fu came up to CTTB from San Francisco once a week and everyone wanted to see Shr Fu. I'd be thinking all day long, "When is Shr Fu coming?" If we knew Shr Fu was coming, all the hardship from our work would disappear and the work would become very light and smooth. "Oh, Shr Fu is coming!" We would be extra energetic and work even harder. The first wooden frame was made that way. I was slowly working on the frame and thinking about how to do it. Before I knew it, the frame was done! At that time, Dharma Master Lai walked to the rooftop and teased me, "You are a carpenter now!" I replied, "I made such a mess. Do I seem like a carpenter?" I felt ashamed because I really did not know what I was doing but I did it somehow! The mountain gate you see now was made with slow learning and work. Luckily, Guo Fa patiently led us in working on this. You should know that we had never worked before and that was the first time. We just took the saw in our hands and sawed the wood. Gradually, we learned. This was how the mountain gate was made. After that, we returned to San Francisco and worked outside for some time.

In fact, we were not that bad; we were just mischievous, fun-loving guys who liked to fool around with our friends. I didn't know how to follow rules. Thinking back, there was a period when we had fallen. Fortunately, the Venerable Master saved us. That's why, for 30 years, I have never left the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

✎To be continued