

大家庭裏的小嬰兒 (續)

A Little Baby in the Big Family of Buddhism (Continued)

SPOKEN BY JOHN SCROGGS ON NOVEMBER 17, 2001

史果露居士於2001年11月17日口述

COMPILED BY EDITORIAL STAFF 編輯部整理

One time I broke one of my big toes while working. I went to have an X-ray, which showed that the bone was broken in three places. The doctor told me, "There is nothing much we can do for you." He went ahead and taped my toes together and didn't even put it in a splint and sent me back. I was sort of walking around gingerly. Shifu ran into me in the Great Compassion Quarters. He insisted on having me sit down. He did one of his healing hands (as of the Forty-Two Hands and Eyes) on my feet. I am not sure what he was reciting—what Dharma or mantras he was practicing. But as he was doing it, I could feel my bones were moving. I assumed that Shifu was aware that if he did not step in and help, then there would be some kind of problems in the end. Because I have seen that in the past there was an American monk (Gwo Sun Shr might remember his name) during the Session at Gold Mountain Monastery at 15th St., who got a blood clot in his legs. I remember Shifu went to him and gave a similar treatment for him. It was a very dangerous situation for if nothing was done about it, the clot could break and cause a stroke and go into the brain. So Shifu took care of it.

Since you asked about the difference between now and then, "then" has the benefit of Shifu's presence and his encouragement. He also stressed



the importance of maintaining the schedule and not being casual about doing ceremonies. We were always running away and breaking the rules to a certain extent [chuckling]. But you know we did our best. There are many stories about people's breaking the rules however. Like Heng Ju's episode with apple pie on the roof. I think everything is pretty much the same now as then except the ceremonies are more refined; the Sangha has learned more to do the ceremonies correctly. And because there are more people who are actually cultivating, there are more people naturally following the rules and programs than there used to be. I am encouraged by the way things are going now. I don't really feel Shifu has left, although his physical presence isn't here, so we miss out on the scolding [chuckles].

As for the question you asked about why there are fewer American monks now than before, it is because

有一次，因為工作造成腳大拇指骨頭受傷，去照愛克斯光，才知道骨頭有三處斷裂。醫生說：「我們不能幫你做什麼。」然後把我腳拇指包紮後，也未加支架就叫我回去，我必須小心翼翼的走路。那一天在大悲殿遇到師父，他堅持要我坐下。他用那治病的手(如四十二手眼)放在我腳上，我不知道他在唸什麼，是經文或是咒語。但是當他在加持，我感到腳拇指的骨頭在移動，師父當時如果不幫我的話，後果可能不堪設想。因為我在十五街金山聖寺的時候，有一個美國僧人(果遜師或許記得他的名字)，他的腿部有一個血栓，我曾目擊師父也用同樣方式幫他治療。那是一個很嚴重的情況，如果沒有及時治療，血栓破裂會造成腦部中風，幸好有師父關照他。

當我第一次遇到上人，在他座下學習，我發現身為一個西方人，坐在講堂聽講，是我一生中最難做到的一件事，就像每天超過一小時以上對我的頭敲打一樣，現在還有一樣的感覺。雖然感覺學佛法很好，但也很困難。

問：談談道場過去和現在的的不同。

答：過去我們受益於師父的住世和他的鼓勵。他常強調維持大眾功課的重要，要很嚴肅的進行各項儀軌。當時我們常常偷偷跑掉，有許多不守規矩的故事，就像恆具Heng Ju將蘋果派弄到屋頂的事。現在很多事還是像以前一樣的，除儀式是比較上軌道了，因僧團知道怎樣正確的做儀式。而且修行的人也多了，所以有比較多的人遵循規矩和做功課，我對目前的狀況我感覺有進步。我

there were so many obstacles during the course of building the Jeweled Hall. I think in general Shifu's vision isn't easy to establish. I can attest to that from my own background, because it had taken me so long to get rid of some of the obstacles, the coverings, habits, and the way of thinking that are so common to Westerners, in order to understand or get an idea what Shifu was about. But just because it is difficult, I don't think it is a case that shouldn't be done. If it takes a long time to get started, perhaps it will last a long time, once it has been established. As conditions ripen, it will happen. I am not of any opinion of when this can be done, right away, next year, or.... I just have the faith that it will not happen until it is appropriate. That is my feeling.

On Taking Refuge and Receiving Precepts

Q: I heard that you and Craig [Gwo Sun Shr] took the 10 Major and 48 Minor Bodhisattva Precepts at the same time. Can you talk about the background of that as well as how you felt about it?

A: I had a great deal of difficulty in understanding the concept of taking precepts and the idea of becoming a disciple. I didn't understand why it was necessary to do any of those things. I thought, "Well, why can you just associate and do your best and why bother to formalize anything?" I was told by various people that this is what I should do: I should take refuge. I should take precepts. I should do this and that. So I went along with the program. I did not understand the importance of taking refuge until after I took refuge. After I took refuge, I had a dream. In the dream I was in a big room full of golden light. There were people there welcoming me, like my new family. I was a little baby. They

were all adults. I felt I had come home. I would never have had that dream, feeling or experience had I not taken refuge. It is a kind of "you learn as you do" experience for me.

Craig and I were both thinking about leaving home for a long time, but I just decided to stop thinking about it after it nearly drove me crazy for about five or ten years. I couldn't make up my mind. I must have too many obstacles. Shifu was very adamant about this: If you leave home life, you leave for good, for your whole life, not with the intent of going back to lay life. Because he was very adamant in that respect, I didn't feel that I should leave home until after I was absolutely sure, so I wouldn't make a mistake. Leaving the home life is still in the back of my mind, but it is not a priority or something I think a lot about.

I bought some properties which I am developing in Willits, and I also work here [at CTTB]. I am not attached to any of it particularly. I feel that the world is in a very tenuous place right now. I don't feel the world at large is very stable, and it won't be stable for very long. I remember one time I was walking in the great Compassion Quarters and saw Shifu. Shifu gave me instructions on how to build big beds for people. We don't have them in the West, but I guess that in the East there are large rooms for community beds for 20 or 30 people to sleep, all on one bed. I just have the feeling that this place is going to expand in a surprising way. Needing them would partly be due to conditions outside as they change and affect CTTB for short periods of time. So it is important for us to prepare somewhat for the future.

Q: Any story about your parents?

A: My family was fundamentalist Christian. They were really antagonistic towards the Abbot [Ven. Master].

They felt as if he were a cult leader. So when they came down to visit me one time here at CTTB, Shifu said to my mother, "You know your son will do anything I tell him to do (like a cult follower would do), so if you want him to get married, I will tell him to get married, and he will go get married. All you have to do is to go bow to the Buddha. Go bow to the Buddha once, and I will tell him to go get married [chuckle]." They both thought that was a little funny. But I could never get them to bow, or even nod their heads in acknowledgement of Buddhism. But they did change their way of perceiving the Abbot. They began to think of him as a kindly old man. Yet, they were still fixed in their ways—very difficult for them to deal with any "outsider." I took the time to take care of my parents from 1986 to 1996.

On the 18 Days of Fasting

It was very difficult. Yet just because everybody was doing it, I decided to do it. We transferred the merit and virtue to the purchase of this property (CTTB). I got some fire disease. The right side of my face got all swollen. Shifu said I should drink some grapefruit juice, which I did. After I first met the Abbot and studied under him, I found that as a Westerner, sitting in the lecture was one of the most difficult things that I ever had to do in my life. I felt as if I was getting hit on my head by a stick every day for over an hour. It is still that way in a sense. It is wonderful, and it is also difficult.

My Daily Practice

I recited the Shurangama Heart Mantra every evening. I thought merely because of Earth Store Bodhisattva's vow, I had more affinity with him. I do 南無地藏王菩薩 (*Na Mo Di Zang Wang Pu Sa*) "Homage to Earth Treasury

King Bodhisattva”) most of the time, to keep myself from having false thinking. His vow is so far-reaching. I also do morning ceremony and read/recite sutras. As far as responses are concerned, I think I was able to develop a more humane relationship with my family—both of parents were able to accept their death very well. I consider that a response to some of my effort to cultivate some merit on their behalf. (The End)

不感覺師父已經不在了，因為他的肉身不在這裏，我們反而更懷念他對我們的責罵(輕笑聲)。

問：我們的大雄寶殿何時可以蓋成？

答：因為在建寶殿的過程中，有太多的障礙。我想一般來說，師父的遠見是不易達成。我可以個人的背景做證明，我花了很長一段時間，除去我的舊習(障礙)，例如一般西方人常見的穿著、習性與想法，才有辦法粗淺地了解明白師父的想法。但是不能因為比較困難，就不要去做。如果需要很長時間去開始，一旦建立以後，或許也會延續很長一段時間。所以因緣成熟了，它就會出現的。我不是說何時可以完成，當下或明年或……。我只是有信心地說，在機緣未成熟前是不會發生，這是我的感受。

問：聽說您和奎克(果遜師)兩個人同時受十重四十八輕菩薩戒，談一談當時的背景和感受。

答：我很難了解，對受戒的觀念和成為佛弟子的想法，不了解為什麼一定要做這些事？我想：「為什麼我不能只是做和佛教有關，然後盡力去做？為何有許多人告訴我，這是我必須做的：應該皈依，應該受戒，應該這樣，

應該那樣？」當時並不明白皈依的重要性，我只是跟著做而已，直到皈依以後才明白。皈依以後做了一個夢，夢中我一個充滿金光的大房間裏。裏面有許多人，像新家庭一樣歡迎我。我只是個小嬰兒，他們都是大人，感覺像回到家一樣。如果我沒有皈依，我不會做那個夢，也不會有那感受和經驗，這就像「邊做邊學」的經驗。

奎克和我常想到要出家，出家念頭幾乎逼瘋我，但是經過五或十年之後，我決定不再去想它。我無法下決心，因為有太多障礙了。師父對這點的要求是很嚴格的，如果要出家那是為了自己好，是為自己的一生，不要再存有還俗的念頭。因為他很堅持，所以在我尚未完全確定之前，我不會輕舉妄動，不要犯錯。我仍是會想到出家的事，但這不是目前最優先的事，也不是我常想的事。

我在Willis買了些土地準備開發，也在萬佛城做工，並沒有特別傾向哪一項。我覺得目前這個世界是一個很不穩定的地方，而且會不穩定一段很長時間。記得有一次我走進大悲殿時遇到師父，師父給我指示如何去給一般的人蓋大床(註：通鋪)。在西方是沒有這樣的通鋪，但我猜想在東方是有這樣的大房間大通鋪，可以供二、三十個人睡覺的地方。我只有一種感覺，這個地方將以驚人的方式擴張起來。我們會需要這些大通鋪，是因為外緣的改變，它將會臨時短期內以備萬佛聖城過渡應急之用。所以我們要為未來做一些準備是很重要的。

問：談談有關您雙親的故事

答：我的家庭，是屬於基本教義的基督徒。他們是很反對上人，以為他是一個邪教領袖。有一次他們到萬佛聖城看我，我記得師父告訴家母：「你知道你兒子會依我的指示，去做任何的事(就像邪教信徒一樣)，所以如果妳要他去結婚，我會告訴他叫他結婚，他會聽話去結婚的。但是你唯一需要做的，就是去給佛陀頂禮，只要頂禮一次，我就叫他去結婚(輕笑聲)。」我的雙親都覺得有點可笑，但是我根本沒辦法勸服他們去禮佛，或是讓他們對佛教的認知點頭。但是這事倒促成改變他們對方丈的看法，開始覺得上人是位慈祥的老人；雖然他們還是固守自己的方式，很難和「外人」打交道。在一九八六至一九九六年間我暫時離開聖城，回家照顧我的雙親。

問：談談斷食十八日的經驗

答：這是很困難，但是因為大家都在做，所以我也決定跟著做，我們將功德迴向給購買萬佛聖城房產一事。當時我得了一種「火」病(註：上火氣了)，我的右臉頰腫了。師父說我應該喝葡萄柚汁，我也照做了。

問：您每日的功課是什麼？

答：我每天傍晚誦唸楞嚴咒咒心。地藏王菩薩的大願，讓我覺得比較親近，所以大部份時間我誦「南無地藏王菩薩」聖號，他的大願無窮，來防止我起妄想。我也做早課，閱讀或是念經。至於有關感應部份，我想我與我的家庭有比較融洽的關係，我的雙親都能坦然面對接受他們的死亡，這些都是我為他們修功德的感應吧！ (全文完)