

萬事萬物 都在說法 君知否？

Did You Know that Everything Is Speaking the Dharma?

比丘尼恒貴 講於萬佛聖城開光30週年7月4日大法會

A talk by Bhikshuni Heng Gwei on July 4, 2009 at the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the Founding of CTTB

上人慈悲，各位同參，各位善知識！

上人常常說「萬事萬物都是在給我們說法，都是在教育我們。」最近在法界聖城有一個很好的教育的題材，所以我們做成一個投影片給大家介紹一下。

這棵大松樹，大概有五、六十年，很高大，很莊嚴，而且這個樹蔭非常之寬大，我們常常在下面做運動。法界聖城的太陽很猛烈，但是站在那棵樹蔭底下，那就很舒服了。可是，很可惜！這麼茂盛高大的松樹，它的樹幹是斜的，隨著年歲，越長越高大，也越長越斜，斜到要靠周圍旁邊的兩棵樹來支持。那兩棵樹很辛苦在撐著，每次走過那兩棵樹，我們都很不忍心。但是也沒有辦法幫助，就看著它，一天一天地歪斜。最後在上個月六月五號前一個晚上十點多有閃電，閃了很久，同參們都很害怕，不敢隨便亂動它，就在附近教室坐下來看著。結果第二天清晨四點半，這棵樹終於倒下來了；倒下來之後，當然支持它的一棵樹也都受到波及，也被折斷了。那麼另外一支，勉強地，可能還可以生存。

看見這棵龐然巨大的松樹躺下來的時候，我就想到一個人開始的時候，譬如

The Venerable Master, fellow cultivators, good wise teachers!

Venerable Master Hsuan Hua used to say, "Everything is speaking the wonderful Dharma and is teaching us!" Recently, we had a good educational lesson at the City of the Dharma Realm (CDR) which I would like to share by way of a short slide show, with commentary.

There was a huge 50 or 60 year-old pine tree growing on the grounds at CDR. It was gigantic and beautiful. We often exercised beneath it. Even though the sun was very hot, it was very comfortable underneath the shade of that pine [a Monterey Cypress]. The trunk of this large pine tree, however, had not grown straight and the more the tree aged, the more crooked it got. Finally, it could no longer support itself and started to lean against two other adjacent trees. It was difficult for the two adjacent trees to sustain the weight of this old tree. While we felt sorry for the two adjacent trees, we had no way to help them or the pine tree either. The only thing we could do was to watch as the pine grew ever more crooked with time. Finally, last month, the evening before June 5, there were a few sustained flashes of lightning during a mild rain storm in the night. My fellow cultivators were all afraid that the tall pine might fall over, and they sat by in a neighboring classroom just quietly observing it. In the end, the pine finally did crash to the ground at about 4:30 the next morning. Unfortunately, on its way down, it injured the two supporting trees. One was completely snapped off and



在小孩子，要種因的時候，一定要把它種得端端正正。不光是小孩子，好像我們學佛的人，甚至於我們出家人，出家養成的教育是非常重要的。它決定我們的前途，假如我們的種子，因沒有種好，沒有種正，越長大越危險，最後自己也撐不住自己的重量，只有倒下來，被毀掉，這個是非常可惜的。所以孔子說：「幼成若天性，習慣成自然。」小孩子一定要讓他養成良好的生活習慣，我們剛學佛的，也應該要注意那個開始，要把基礎奠定好。那麼我們學佛修行的基礎是什麼呢？就是上人常常提醒我們的六大宗旨：不爭、不貪、不求、不自私、不自利、不打妄語，這是我們良好的基礎，也是我們圓滿佛國的基礎。假如我們沒有把這個因種好，無論我們長得怎麼樣大，看起來怎麼樣的風光，都是沒有用的。

這棵樹的樹輪，大概有五、六十個。但是當它倒下來，要處理的時候，不到一星期就處理好了。可見要培養一個棟樑之材是要花很多的時間心血；要毀掉它的，是很快。其實在日常生活中，處處都是佛法，都在給我們現身說法，「如是因，如是果。」所以上人常常說：「差之毫釐，謬之千里。」私毫都不可以馬虎，不可以錯亂。雖然我們毛病很多，習氣很重，但是假如我們能相信善知識的教導，嚮往這個完美的境界，即便我們現在還沒有把習氣毛病修改得很圓滿，但一定要鼓勵自己，要看準目標，立定志向，朝著六大宗旨去幫助自己打好良好的修行基礎。

記得當這棵樹倒下來露出根部的時候，我的同參說：「很奇怪，這棵樹這麼高大，這麼茂盛，但它的根原來這麼淺的。」



died, while the other barely survived.

The collapse of the pine made me think about the importance of planting a proper seed or cause from the very beginning – at the outset of whatever it is that we want to do. When raising a child, for example, we need to provide a proper education. Likewise, for those who study the Buddha-dharma, and even left home people, we need to provide a proper education, and a proper Sangha education to develop characters. Our level of education determines our future. If the seed or cause is not planted properly in the first place, then the older and bigger we become, the more crooked and at risk we are, until finally we can't fully support ourselves, and we fall. What a pity!

Confucius taught that the traits and habits we develop when young become a part of our very nature. In other words, traits and habits eventually become an integral and natural part of us. Similarly we beginners–Buddhists just entering the Path–need to pay attention, be mindful and lay a good foundation. So what is this good foundation for the study and practice of Buddhism? It is the Six Guidelines handed down to us by the Venerable Master. How often he has reminded us not to fight, not to be greedy, not to seek, not to be selfish, not to pursue personal advantage, and not to lie. If we could actually practice and accomplish the Six Great Principles we would not only build a good solid foundation for our lives, but also for perfect Buddhahood itself. But if we don't plant such good causes in the first place, then no matter how large and flashy we grow, we'll still be useless.

By counting the rings inside the trunk of the enormous, fallen pine, we could see that it was about fifty or sixty years old. But after it fell, it took not even a week to clean up the mess. By analogy, it is evident that it takes a lot of time and effort to nurture a person's character, but ruin can happen in an instant.

In our daily lives, everything is speaking the wonderful Dharma. Where there are causes, there most certainly will be effects. The Venerable Master used to put it this way: "Off by a hair in the beginning, off by a thousand miles in the end." He meant, of course, that when planting causes we cannot be sloppy or off even by a little bit in the beginning. So, although we may have many strong bad habits now, at the time of our own "causes and beginnings," if we can just have faith in our Good-Knowing Advisors, follow their guidance, try to correct ourselves, and encourage ourselves in laying a good foundation, then perhaps in the end, we will have overcome our bad habits, and will have good "effects and endings" commensurate with the good "causes and beginnings" that we planted in the first place. How to do it? We need to vow to perfect and accomplish the Six Great Principles. We need to set goals, and we need to encourage ourselves to meet those goals.

I remember when the roots of the great tree were first exposed, one of my fellow cultivators commented: "How strange! Such a big tree, but the roots are so shallow!" So the pine appeared nice and full on the surface but underground it actually had shallow roots. So if our own roots are not deep, even the best of the Dharma can't penetrate. Perhaps the expression "trying to scratch with boots on" will illustrate the point. How can we

菩提田 Bodhi Field

所以外面好像很好看，但是根不深；根不深，再好的法也都不會觸達到我們內心的深處，都只是隔靴搔癢，更談不到圓成我們的佛果。因此，我們要注重這個根本才是重要，不要捨本逐末。什麼叫捨本逐末？上人說：「一個學佛的人，若只是常常想到自己的利益，怎麼樣利益自己？這個就是末梢；常常想到要利益旁人，怎麼樣幫助旁人，得到幸福快樂，這個就是根本。」所以從這棵樹倒下來，讓我更相信萬佛聖城的六大宗旨，是奠定我們修行佛法最根本的基礎。因此個人願意把這棵倒下來的大松樹的提示和大家分享，希望我們互相勉勵，共同策進。

even talk about attaining the perfect fruition, of attaining Buddhahood? So it is important to focus first on the basics and to not go running after branch-tips while forgetting the root, so to speak. The Venerable Master said, "If a student of Buddhism just thinks mostly about himself and about how to benefit himself, then he is functioning at the level of the branch-tips, or at the level of the superficial, whereas, by contrast, if a student of Buddhism thinks mostly about how to benefit others, and how to help them to attain blessings and happiness, then he is functioning at the level of the root, or of the origin."

So, the collapse of the great pine spoke the wonderful Dharma in such a way that I was able to reflect anew upon the Six Great Principles as handed down by the Venerable Master, and upon how they truly are the foundation, the origin, and the root of cultivation. May we all encourage each other and move forward.