

A Dharma Army 一支佛法的部隊

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Before leaving this world, the Venerable Master taught us everything we need to know—and more—to become liberated. The only question, of course, is what we do with his teachings. The first Americans he taught were most interested in meditation and studying the sutras, and so in the beginning that was what he taught. When the conditions were ripe, he introduced the dharma door of repentance and reform. He taught us many different dharma doors, but you could say that—depending on the level of who he was teaching at the time—he emphasized some dharma doors over others, and one of the dharma doors he emphasized at CTTB was that of repentance and reform. He also emphasized Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva's dharma doors of great compassion. I'll give you a little story of how one day he combined these two in a most skillful and special way.

It was the celebration day of Guanyin Bodhisattva's birthday, and a life-sized image of the White-robed Guanyin Bodhisattva holding a willow branch and vase of sweet dew water had just arrived at CTTB. It was made of fiberglass and so was quite light for the size. The Venerable Master had the image placed in the back of a pick-up truck—facing out the back—and sent the truck down to the Mountain Gate where a group of us were practicing three-steps-one bow on our way to the Buddha Hall for the celebration. As we bowed along the road, the truck slowly inched along before us. It was as if Guanyin Bodhisattva was welcoming us and pulling us along while pouring sweet dew on our crowns as we bowed. It was as if we were bowing to Guanyin Bodhisattva the entire way.

We finally arrived at the Buddha Hall, purified from our bowing. The Venerable Master was waiting for us by the door and as each one of us entered the hall, he personally handed us a stick

在圓寂之前，師父教導了我們所需要知道的一切——而且比應該知道的更多——以期得到解脫。當然，唯一的問題是，我們怎麼實踐他的教誨。他第一批教的美國人最感興趣的，是打坐和研究經典；所以在一開始，他所教的就是這些。但是，當機緣到了，他就介紹懺悔法門。他還教導我們許多不同的法門，但可以說，他是因時制宜、因材施教——針對其他人強調某些法門。而在萬佛聖城他最強調的法門之一，就是懺悔；他還強調觀世音菩薩的大悲法門。我要跟大家分享一個故事，是關於有一天師父如何用非常權巧方便的方法，將這兩個法門連在一起。

那是在有一年慶祝觀音誕的當天，有一尊真人大小，手持楊枝與甘露淨瓶的白衣觀音像正好抵達聖城。這尊觀音像是玻璃纖維鑄造的，所以以它的尺寸來說，還算蠻輕的。師父叫人把觀音像直立在小卡車後面，臉朝外面，並把車開到山門口去——那兒我們有一群人正在三步一拜，準備一路禮拜到大殿，以慶祝觀音誕。當我們一路禮拜、朝山時，卡車緩慢地在我們面前行駛；那樣子就好像是觀音菩薩在用甘露水灌我們的頂，並接引我們。我們似乎全程都是以這種方式在禮拜觀音菩薩。

當我們終於到達大殿，從我們的禮拜得到淨化時，師父站在門口等著我們；就在我們一個一個進入大殿之時，他親手將每一支香交給我們每一個人，讓我們可以到大殿上香。這是很不尋常的，因為通常他不會允許大殿一次點一支香以上。我相信，在當天他用這麼樣子的權宜方便，

of incense to offer at the altar. This was unusual because ordinarily he did not allow more than one stick at a time in the censor. I believe he used such expedients that day to emphasize and encourage us about the importance of bowing. I am certain that the repentance and reform dharma door must be a very important practice indeed.

The Venerable Master further emphasized Guanyin Bodhisattva's Dharmas of compassion such as the Great Compassion Mantra, the Great Compassion Repentance, the 42 Hands & Eyes, recitation of the "Universal Door" chapter of the *Dharma Flower [Lotus] Sutra* and others. He taught us the importance of cultivation, not only for ourselves, but also for the benefit of the world. When we entered the hall to cultivate, we felt that we were fulfilling a purpose, that we were making a contribution to the world. Were we really making a contribution or was that just an expedient to get us to cultivate? Who knows? And yet it had an effect.

For example, at Gold Mountain Monastery Shr Fu taught us to recite the first lines of the Shurangama Mantra every evening. He said that our recitation would help prevent from earthquake in San Francisco. During those years, there were many predictions of an earthquake but it never happened. Later at CTTB, he changed from using the Shurangama Mantra to using the Heart Mantra. At one point, some of the cultivators got tired of reciting the mantra at night. They said it was too much suffering. In order to get up early for morning recitation, they had to go to bed a little earlier. Although the Master taught us what we should do, he didn't force it on us, so he allowed us to discontinue that practice. Within a week, the Chernobyl disaster occurred. Then Shr Fu didn't have to tell us to start reciting the mantra heart again. We did it ourselves. And this is still practiced at DRBA branch monasteries around the world.

The Master said that we were like an army—a Dharma army—going to battle against the forces of darkness and ignorance in the world, helping to lessen great disasters and eradicate small ones. He also said that we were his helpers. When we went to the Buddha Hall to recite mantras, we were each adding a little drop to the ocean of his inconceivable work. Still there were many predictions of doom. Does our recitation have any effect? Of course we could never know or prove it one way or the other. Yet, there are countless stories of people who have clearly received efficacious responses from recitation. There are books filled with such stories. My fellow cultivators have had such experiences. To this day we can continue to assist the Master in his work, because I do believe that—true to his nature when he was with us—wherever he is now, he is still working hard and not resting.

是為了強調並鼓勵我們禮拜的重要性；從這個，我更可以肯定，這個法門真的一定是非常重要的修行！

上人進一步強調觀世音菩薩的慈悲法門，如〈大悲咒〉、大悲懺、42手眼，讀誦《妙法蓮華經·普門品》等等。他教導我們修行的重要性，不僅為自身，也對這個世界有助益。所以，每當我們走進大殿修行時，我們認為，正在履行一個目的——正在對世界奉獻。或者我們真的作出了貢獻，或者那只是一個讓我們修行的權宜之計？誰知道？然而，它似乎頗有效應。

例如，在金山寺，師父教我們每晚讀誦〈楞嚴咒〉的第一行。他說，我們的持誦，將有助於防止舊金山大地震。在那些年裡，雖然有許多地震的預測報導，但都沒有發生。後來，搬到萬佛聖城，師父要我們改誦楞嚴咒心。有一次，萬佛聖城有一些修行者厭倦在夜間持誦咒語。他們說，這太痛苦了；為了每天一早能早起做早課，我們需要早一點上床養息。雖然師父教我們應該做什麼，但不會勉強我們，他同意我們停止這種做法。就在我們停止誦持咒心不到一個星期，就發生了烏克蘭的車諾比核子反應爐災害事件（1986年4月26日）。之後，不用師父說，我們自動開始誦楞嚴咒心；至今在世界各地法總所有的分支道場，大家仍然如此實行。

上人說，我們就像一個部隊——佛法的部隊——要跟世界黑暗與無明的勢力來打仗，幫忙將大災難化小，小的災難化無。他還表示，我們就像他的助手；所以每當我們去大殿持咒，就如同在師父不可思議的工作海中，注上一滴水的力量。即使如此，仍然有許多預測的厄運在；我們的課誦有作用嗎？當然，我們永遠無法知道，或用哪一種方式予以證明。但是，仍然有無數的故事，提到人們從課誦中清楚地收到有效的感應；有很多書記載這樣的故事，我和我的同參道友也都有過這樣的親身經歷。到今天，我們還能繼續幫助師父這種救世的工作；因為我深信，他的法身自性一如過去與我們在一起時那樣真實——不管他現在在哪裡，他仍然是「流血汗，不休息」！

