

捨家繫縛苦 善得解脫樂

Letting Go of the Oppressive Ties of the Lay Life, Obtaining the Bliss of Liberation

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A lecture given by Shi Guo Xing on November 6, 2009 at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas

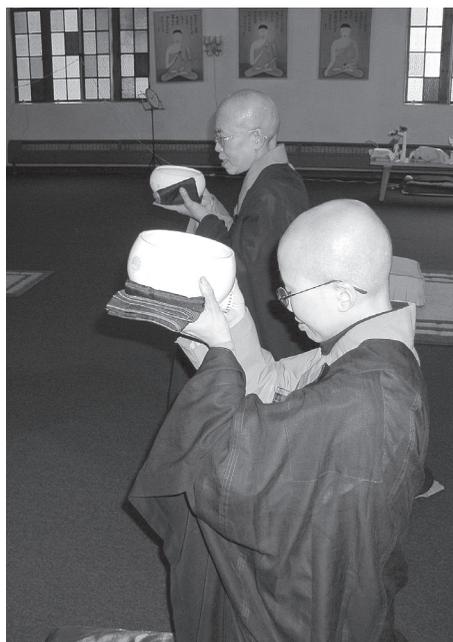
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現在是觀世音菩薩的出家日法會；為什麼觀世音菩薩要出家？不僅觀世音菩薩，過去諸佛，現在諸佛，未來諸佛，都要示現出家修道。今天我們大家一起來研究為什麼要出家？要出什麼樣的家？

世間的人認為家非常的好，所以一生忙忙碌碌不僅為自己，也為了家人，想要佈置一個溫暖舒適的家。到底家的真相是什麼？《大寶積經》中講：所謂「家」者，名「殺善根」，就是把善根殺害了；名「不捨過」，在家我們不會捨棄自己的過失；名「害諸善業」，會妨礙我們善業的成就，是故名家。云何名「在」呢？什麼叫在家的「在」呢？「一切結使在中住故，故名為在。」這一切煩惱，都在這裡面住著，就是名「在」。我們從這部佛經中知道，在家真的是很不好。在家一天，我們的善根就一點點地灼傷；在家久了的話，就越來越不想要出家了。

剛剛說的前面那個家，是我們的世俗的家；講出家，首先要出的，就是損害我們善根的世俗家。第二個，我們真正出家，是「出煩惱家」，「出三界家」，而離如來的家是越來越近了。

在家有無量多的過患；而出家則有無量多的功德、妙好。《華嚴經》也講到：「家是貪



Now we are having the Dharma Assembly for Guanyin Bodhisattva's Leaving Home Day. Why did Guanyin Bodhisattva leave the home life? Actually, Guanyin Bodhisattva was not the only one; the Buddhas of the past, present, and future all manifest leaving the home life to practice. Today, let's investigate the purpose of leaving the home life and the kind of home we are leaving.

Worldly people think that the home is a very nice place, so they work day in and day out just to have a cozy and comfortable home. But what is the truth behind "home"? The *Sutra of Accumulating Great Jewels* says: "Home means 'eradicating good roots' because it destroys good roots; it means 'not letting go of faults,' because as ordinary people we tend to hang onto our faults; and it also means 'damaging all good karma,' because it prevents us from accomplishing wholesome karma." Then what does "in" [from "in the home life"] mean? "All afflictions reside 'in' the home." From the *Sutra of Accumulating Great Jewels*, we can see that the home life isn't as wonderful as we think. Our good roots burn and die with every day we spend in the home, so if we stay there too long, we begin to lose the ambition of leaving the home life.

The "home" we were talking about earlier was the worldly home. In leaving the home life, the first "home" we have to leave is the worldly home that

愛繫縛所，欲使眾生悉免離；故示出家得解脫，於諸欲樂無所受。」這很明白告訴我們，在家就會貪愛繫縛，有種種的煩惱在裡面。所以菩薩為了幫助眾生離苦，才示現出家得解脫。漸漸地遠離五欲快樂，沒有那麼多的貪愛。《華嚴經·淨行品》也提到：「菩薩在家，但願眾生，知家性空，免於逼迫。」家真的是很具逼迫的。

記得前幾年，我們在金聖寺兒童班，教孩子們背〈淨行品〉；家長在家裡也陪著一起背。有位家長每次背到這一段，就覺得很有同感，家真的是非常的具逼迫性。我們知道家這麼不好，想要出家；為什麼出家的心還沒有發起來？或者是，雖然想要出家，但因緣還沒有成熟？這是因為出家要具有三德。

哪三德呢？一是祖上要有德，二是父母有德，再加上自己要有德；具備這三德才能出家。我是直到最近，尤其這次觀世音菩薩的成道日法會，才體會到出家真不容易。不知道自己有什麼德，可是最近聽到幾位法師談他們的出家因緣，也讓我慢慢回想起了自己，當時要出家的前前後後的經過，可以說是觀世音菩薩，在一路的接引我、幫助我、攝受我，才讓我最終走上出家這條菩提大道。所以，如果今天不講講自己出家的這部經的話，都有點對不起觀世音菩薩。

1989年十月，上人應邀到臺灣舉行護國息災大悲觀音法會，有幸在法會中做服務臺的義工。在服務臺的所見所聞，讓我非常的感動。因為上人他在這一個多月裡，把自己的福報迴向給臺灣眾生；把臺灣眾生應該受的苦難，讓他代受；在這一個多月裡，上人不吃一粒米飯。知道這位大善知識，不僅是我這一生，而且生生世世都要依止他出家修行的。

當我發出這樣的心，和家人父母商量，他們不同意；甚至我跪下來求母親，母親說臺灣善知識這麼多，妳為什麼要跑到美國去。但當時已經下定決心，所以就不告而別，自己跑到萬佛城來了；母親知道後非常地難過，天天都在念我。當時我在萬佛城，每天晚上都

damages our good roots. The second one is the true essence of leaving the home life, where we leave the “home of the Three Realms and afflictions,” and draw closer to the home of the Thus Come One.

Whereas the home life gives us countless vexations, leaving the home life gives us limitless merits and benefits. The *Avatamsaka Sutra* says: “The home is a place of greed, love, and oppressing ties; to encourage beings stay far away from it, Bodhisattvas show how to become free by leaving the home life, but do not become defiled by worldly pleasures.” This clearly tells us that in the home, there are all kinds of afflictions that will cause us to be tied down by greed and love. Bodhisattvas demonstrate how to become free by leaving the home life in order to help beings leave suffering. As we gradually leave the ecstasy of the five desires behind, our love and desires will decrease. The Pure Conduct Chapter in the *Avatamsaka Sutra* says, “When the Bodhisattva is in the home, he vows that all beings will know the empty nature of the home and will not be oppressed by it.”

I remember a couple years ago, I was teaching the children’s Sunday school at Gold Sage Monastery, and the children were memorizing the Pure Conduct Chapter. Some parents also participated. One parent said that every time she read the part we mentioned previously, she would feel the same way: that life at home can be really demanding at times. Now that we know that the home can be such a detrimental place, we should think about leaving the home life. Why is it that we have not brought forth this resolve yet? Or, although we may want to leave the home life, why are the conditions not yet ripe? This is because in order to leave the home life, you must be replete with the three virtues.

What are the three virtues? They are the virtue of your ancestors, the virtue of your parents, and your own virtue. You must have sufficient amounts of virtue in these three areas to become a monk or a nun. It was not until recently, especially during the Guanyin Bodhisattva’s Attaining the Way Dharma Assembly, that I realized that leaving the home life was not easy. Lately, I had the opportunity to hear some of the Dharma Masters describing their causes and conditions they encountered when choosing to ordain. It made me think back to my own experiences. I really do not know what virtues I had that enabled me to leave the home life. You can say that it was relying on Guanyin Bodhisattva’s help that I was finally able to become a Bhikshuni. So if I did not talk about how I left the home life today, I would not be doing justice to Guanyin Bodhisattva.

In October of 1989, the Venerable Master was invited to Taiwan to hold a Great Compassion Guanyin Bodhisattva Dharma Assembly. I was very fortunate to serve as a volunteer at the reception desk at that time. Everything I saw and heard touched me deeply. The Venerable Master transferred all of his blessings to the beings in Taiwan and vowed to undergo all of the suffering that was meant for all of the beings in Taiwan. For a whole month, he did not eat even a grain of rice. After knowing this great wise teacher, I vowed that not only in this life, but in every life afterwards, I would leave the home life and practice under him.

After I brought forth this resolve, I discussed it with my family, but they did not give me their permission. I even knelt down in front of my mother

很苦；因為她念得太厲害了，我耳朵癢得不得了，最後耳朵都（被我撓得）結疤了。

那次的大悲觀音法會，是我第一次參加的法會，也是第一次做義工。但在做義工期間，遭到了種種的考驗，比如：受人家誤解，覺得很委屈；服務臺工作很忙，沒有什麼時間參加法會；而且聲音都啞掉了。所以，當時身心都受到很大的煎熬，但自己還是忍住了。在現場，他們說大悲水非常的靈，所以就喝大悲水；一喝下去，說也奇怪，聲音又跑出來了。在法會期間，就自己念觀世音菩薩聖號，喝大悲水，把這個義工的工作給做圓滿了，也許就因此而積下了德吧！

所謂「天降福是逆來的」，現在才明白；因為當時做義工的時候，能夠忍住。當我到萬佛城後，看到當時一起做義工的居士們，也到了萬佛城，但過了一段時間後，都退心走了；我覺得是非常可惜的。我們如果在逆境裡，能夠忍得住，後面的福就會來了；天降福是逆來的啊！

上人一生行孝，他也非常注意弟子們孝順父母。一次對對聯，我的下聯寫：「度盡天下堂上佛」，自己覺得很不錯，洋洋得意。但上人看到後，大聲呵斥：「好大的口氣啊！說什麼度盡天下堂上佛，連自己的父母都不度！」當時很難為情，因為當著那麼多人的面被罵！但後來仔細思量，自己真的沒有好好孝順父母，所以就跟上人講：「弟子會改進。」要不是上人那次的大聲呵斥，還不知道自己不孝順父母。

父親早故，我就趕緊在聖城立了個牌位，還給他受幽冥戒。母親，我就讓她感到她並沒有失去一個女兒，反而她為佛教界培養了一個比丘尼；後來有因緣回家，就教她做簡單的早晚課，還念佛。她後來告訴我：她一聽到我出家了，自然而然地就吃全齋了。母親在2007年四月份以八十九歲高齡安詳捨報；家人都懂得幫她助念，也如法地做佛事。在她火化後，她的骨頭燒出來都是完整的、潔白的，讓我哥哥都覺得很

to plead with her. My mother argued that there were so many good teachers in Taiwan: Why did I have to go to America? But at that point, I had already made up my mind and left for the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas without saying goodbye. When my mother found out, she was very sad and missed me very much. When I was at the City, every single night was unbearable because my mother missed me so much that my ears itched very badly. I scratched them to the point of injury. [Note: In Taiwan, it is said that when someone misses you very much, your ears will itch.]

The first Dharma Assembly I participated in was the Guanyin Dharma Assembly. It was also the first time I volunteered there. During that period, I encountered a number of difficulties. For example, sometimes I was misunderstood, which lowered my self-esteem greatly. There was so much work to do at the reception desk that I was often unable to take part in the Dharma Assembly. At one point, I also lost my voice. I suffered both physically and psychologically, but I endured it all. At the time, some people told me that Great Compassion Water could improve one's health, so I tried it. As soon as I drank it, my voice miraculously returned. Throughout the Dharma Assembly, I was able to hold my volunteer post at the reception desk by reciting Guanyin Bodhisattva's name and drinking Great Compassion Water. Perhaps this was how I accumulated some virtue.

There is a saying, "Blessings come from hardships and difficulties." My volunteer experience is a good testimony to this proverb. When I first came to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, I met quite a few other lay volunteers. But after a while, they all lost heart and left. I think this is really a shame. If we can undergo a difficult situation without turning away, then blessings will follow.

The Venerable Master practiced filial respect throughout his whole life, and he also paid close attention to whether his disciples were filial or not. One time, we were writing couplets, and the couplet I wrote was "Crossing over all of the Buddhas in the hall." [Note: "Buddhas in the hall" is a euphemism for parents.] I was quite satisfied with what I had written. But when the Venerable Master saw it, he scolded me loudly: "How vain! You say that you want to 'cross over all the Buddhas in the hall,' but you haven't even tried to cross over your own parents!" I was very embarrassed. The Master had scolded me in front of quite a few people. But after I deeply thought about it, I realized that I really had not been filial to my parents. I told the Master, "Your disciple will change." If it hadn't been for the scolding the Venerable Master had given me that time, I would not have recognized I was unfilial.

My father passed away rather young, and after his death, I immediately set up a plaque for him at the City and honored him in the Precepts for the Deceased ceremony. As for my mother, I let her know that she did not lose a daughter, but had raised a Bhikshuni for the Buddhist community. Later, I had the opportunity to return home. I taught her how to do simple morning and evening recitations, and how to recite the Buddha's name. She told me that when she heard that I had become a nun, she became a vegetarian very naturally. My mother passed away in April of 2007 at the age of 89. My family members recited the Buddha's name for her and did everything in accord with the Dharma. After her cremation, her bones came out whole

驚訝，而且還撿出舍利花、舍利子。到這個時候，家人就諒解我為什麼會選擇出家；因為出家才能真正幫助父母離苦得樂，幫助家人親近三寶，學習佛法。

如果有子女要出家，我們應該趕緊幫助他；因為我們的祖先要靠他成道，來離苦得樂。如果我們的同修想出家，我們趕緊幫助他；不要拖累他。總之，希望在今天觀世音菩薩出家法會上，大家都能發個淨願。最後祝福大家，能夠遂心滿願，出家成功。

and pure white. They even found sharira [relics] in the ashes. My older brother was very surprised. It was not until then that my family realized why I chose to leave the home life. I wanted to truly help my parents leave suffering and attain bliss. I hoped to help my family members draw close to the Triple Jewel and learn the Buddhadharma.

If our children wish to leave the home life, we should help them in whatever way we can, because our ancestors depend on their cultivation to help them leave suffering and attain bliss. If our spouses wish to leave the home life, we should help them as much as possible and not obstruct them. In conclusion, I hope that today on this holiday to celebrate Guanyin's leaving the home life that everyone can bring forth a pure resolve. I also hope that everyone's wishes will come true – especially if your wish is to become a monastic.