

# 上人賓州弘法問答集 (續)

## Questions and Answers During the Venerable Master's Visit to Pennsylvania (continued)

1989年3月開示於彭德山奎格靜修中心  
During the March 1989 Visit to the Quaker Center of Study and  
Contemplation at Pendle Hill

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**聽眾：**您是從中國哪裡來的？是怎樣開始學習佛法的？

**上人：**這個啊，沒有辦法講的，講幾年也講不完。我歡喜學習佛法，所以就學習佛法，這是簡單來說。我也不是從天上來的，我是從地下來的。從哪個國家來的呢？本來我是在中國的，但是我想我也不是中國人，也不是美國人，也不是日本人——哪一個國家也不要我。我不是從天上來的，所以我不是耶穌；我也不是從極樂世界來的，所以我不是阿彌陀佛；我也不是從琉璃世界來的，所以也不是消災延壽藥師佛。因為我是世界上最笨的一個人，他們都不要我。

**聽眾：**我很欣賞您的念珠。它是從哪裡來的？有什麼歷史？有什麼功用？

**上人：**這個啊，從土裡來的。有什麼功用？戴到脖子上做裝飾品，又可以拿到手裡來念。看看這個念珠，心裡不打妄想。這也是它的功用。因為這個叫「念住、念住」，就叫這個念不要跑。你不信我這樣的說法，但是不能因為你不信，我就不說我所要說的話。我要說的話，你信不信我都要說。我要盡上我的責任。

**Question:** Which part of China do you come from? How did you start to learn the Buddhadharma?

**Venerable Master:** [As to where I came from,] If I told him, I could speak for several years and still not finish. Simply put it, I like studying Buddhadharma, therefore, I studies Buddhadharma. I am not from Heaven, I am from the Earth. As for which country I come from? Originally I am from China. But I think I am not Chinese, nor American, nor Japanese. I am not from Heaven, so I am not Jesus. I am not from the Land of Ultimate Bliss, so I am not Amitabha Buddha. I am also not from the Lapis Lazuli World, so I am not Medicine Master Buddha. I am the stupidest person in the world. No country wants me.

**Question:** I like your recitation beads very much. Where did your recitation beads come from? What is the origin of recitation beads in the history of Buddhism? What is the use of the beads?

**Venerable Master:** They are from the earth. What is the use of recitation beads? They can be an adornment if you put them around your neck. If you hold them in your hands, you can use them to recite the Buddha's name. When you see recitation beads, then your mind has no wild thinking. This is also a use of the beads. "The mindfulness stays... the mindfulness stays."<sup>1</sup> So, the mind does not run, as the mind has no false thinking. What do you think of this use? You don't believe what I say? I cannot stop saying it just because you disagree with me. What I intend to say, regardless whether you believe or not, I still have to say it. I have to fulfill my duty.

上人：快點問，沒有時間了。

聽眾：您有多少美國出家弟子？

上人：出家現在有多少個我不知道？還俗的有四五十個。跟我出家的人呢，都很苦的，都要吃一餐。好吃的人呢，都受不了。所以有人問我是什麼宗？我這是「一食宗」。

聽眾：您的碗是不是很大的？

上人：那要看你和什麼人說。若和小孩子說，是吃得很多；若和大人來說，吃得就不一定多。你們看我每天吃多少？我的弟子是一天吃一餐，我這個做師父的，和弟子也一天吃一餐，覺得很慚愧，覺得很對不起徒弟，或者我兩天、三天吃一餐也不一定的。

聽眾：聽說您在中國講道德，講了很多年。現在您教化美國人，是用什麼方法？跟在中國有什麼不同？在美國應該教什麼法門？

上人：美國人很誠實，不拐彎抹角的。

**Venerable Master:** Hurry up and ask your questions, we are running out of time.

**Question:** How many American left-home disciples do you have?

**Venerable Master:** I don't know how many left-home disciples I have, but I do know about 40 to 50 left-home disciples have returned to lay life. Those who joined in the monastic life with me have suffered a lot—all eat one meal a day. Those who like good food cannot take it. Someone asked which School I belong to. I belong to the “One Meal A Day School.”

**Question:** Is your bowl very big?

**Venerable Master:** It depends to whom I am talking. In the eyes of children, I eat a lot. In the eyes of adults, it might not be a lot. Take a look at how much I eat everyday. My disciples eat one meal a day. I, as their teacher, feel ashamed that if I eat the same as them—one meal a day—then I have let them down, so I go on eating probably one meal every two or three days—it is not fixed.

**Question:** I have heard you taught a lot about “virtuous conduct” in China—for many years. Now you teach the same to Americans—so, what is the method of cultivation? What differences are there between these two? Here, in America, what Dharma methods should be taught?

**Venerable Master:** Americans are honest and straightforward. They don't beat about the bush.

<sup>1</sup>The Venerable Master is punning on the phrase 念珠 nian zhu (1<sup>st</sup> tone), and nian zhu (4<sup>th</sup> tone) 念住. The sound is the similar, however the meanings is switching between “recitation beads” and “mindfulness stays.” As mindfulness does not run away, it remains forever.



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