

新月初生漸漸圓

—恒來法師與沙彌的佛根(地)啟示錄

The New Moon Waxes till It Becomes Full

—Dharma Master Lai's Revelation
on the Root of Buddhahood to Novice Monks

比丘恒來 講於2012年8月12日佛根地夏季禪修營
凌峰 中譯

Spoken by Bhikshu Heng Lai at the Buddha Root Farm Summer Retreat
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Chinese Translation by Ling Feng



BODHI FIELD | 菩提田

Bhikshu Heng Lai answers questions from new novices at Buddha Root Farm, Oregon in the summer of 2012. Dharma Master Lai humbly calls himself "the most awful novice" as he shares his causes and conditions for leaving home and cultivating under the Master's guidance. With over 3 decades as a monastic, Dharma Master Lai encourages the novices to build foundations in cultivation with precepts and samadhi on their long path in search of enlightenment. Only then can they attain the great wisdom of Buddhahood.

Q: What was your experience as a novice under the Venerable Master?

A: I met the Master in 1969. Now, most people who met The Master would ask for permission to leave home after one or two years. I not only did not ask the Master if I could leave home in one or two years, I didn't even take refuge until three or four years later. So I'm really the worst person in the world you should be talking to.

After I finally took refuge with the Master, I later asked him if I could leave home. First of all, I thought the Master really wanted me to leave home. That was my first mistake. Dharma

2012年夏日, 比丘恒來法師於奧勒岡州佛根地, 接受新進沙彌們的提問。來法師自謙曾是全世界最糟糕的沙彌, 在問答中, 他與沙彌們細說當年出家的因緣; 傾談在師父上人座下修行的滋味與領悟。出家三十餘載的來法師, 期勉沙彌們在修行的漫漫長路上, 務以戒定為根為基, 方能開展成佛的大智大慧。

問: 您在上人座下當沙彌的經驗是怎麼樣的?

答: 我在1969年遇到了上人。大多數遇到上人的人, 會在一兩年內請求出家。我不僅沒有在一兩年內請求出家, 我甚至三、四年後才皈依, 所以其實我是全世界最不合適回答你們這個問題的人。

不過, 最終我還是皈依了; 皈依之後, 我問上人我是否可以出家。不過我犯了幾個錯誤, 首先我認為上人非常希望我出家, 這是第一個錯誤, 因為當時的比丘恒觀經常催著我出家, 但那只是恒觀自己的想法。我當時的心態是: 「好吧, 好吧! 上人我現在終於要問你我不可出家了。」我沒有這樣說, 不過我的心態是這樣的。

Master Heng Guan kept pressuring me to leave home all the time. But that's just Dharma Master Heng Guan. My attitude was, "Yea, yea. The Master, I'm finally going to ask you if I can leave home." I didn't say that, but that was my attitude.

At that time, there was a very elderly lady, and we both asked the Master formally to leave home. We bowed three times. We were outside his room in Gold Mountain. Loni, the former Dharma Master Heng Yin, she was there, helping with the translation and laughing at me.

So when I finally asked, and the Master goes, "What are you doing up here? What do you want?"

"I want to leave home, The Master."

"Really? You want to leave home? You?"

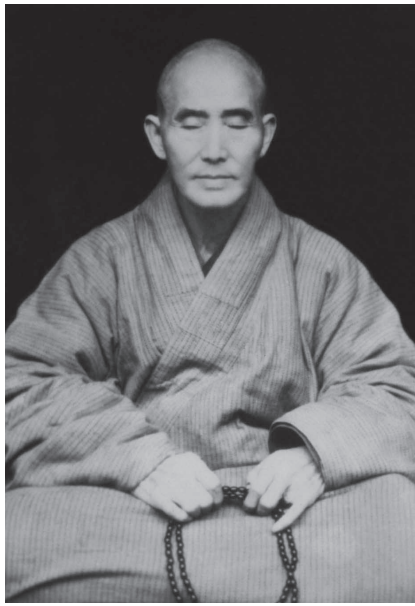
That's when he told me about the Elder Master Hsu Yun. The Master said, "You know, leaving home isn't easy. Are you sure you want to do this? At one time, Master Hsu Yun sat in full lotus for two weeks without moving. He had no enlightenment at that time, and he suffered very much. And he did that just so people would respect the Dharma. That was his motivation. It wasn't to be number one or to show off. It was so people would see this monk sitting there and think, 'Oh. Look at that. That's really something! This monk is really cultivating!' He did that just so people would have respect for the Dharma."

The Master said, "That is the mind of a Bodhisattva. He didn't even have samadhi. He wasn't even awake, and he did that. That's what you have to do if you want to leave home."

And I said, "Oh."

So that was my experience with the Master. I was under the false impression that he wanted me to leave home. I was totally upside down. I found out later that he didn't care whether you leave home or don't leave home. He cares whether you become a Buddha or not—period. How you do it is not that important. What's a lot more important is for you to become a Buddha—the faster, the better. He didn't want to waste time with you.

One day, he told me, "You know, I meet all these people." This was just after we were talking to a car salesman who was trying to sell the Master an automobile, which was really funny. So he's trying to sell the Master a car, and the Master is almost ready to sign the paper when he says, "Hmm, I'm thinking price too much [referring to the car]." He did it at the last minute. It drove



虛雲老和尚法相
Venerable Master Hsu Yun

當時是在金山寺，有一位很老的女居士也想出家，所以我們兩個很正式地在上人房間外磕頭三拜。Loni 也就是當時的恒隱師，在一旁幫忙翻譯，而且還在笑我。所以最後當我開口問上人的時候，上人的回答是，「你在這兒幹什麼？你想要什麼？」

「我想出家，上人。」

「真的嗎？你想出家？你？」

就是那個時候，上人跟我說了虛雲老和尚的故事。上人說，「你知道，出家是不容易的。你確定你要這樣做嗎？有一回，虛老結雙趺，一動也不動地坐了兩個禮拜。當時他不但沒有開悟，而且還受盡許多磨難。但是他這樣做，為的是讓人對佛法生恭敬心，那就是他的動機。他不是為了想爭

第一，或者炫耀。當他這樣做，人家看到一個出家人坐在那兒，心裡就會想，『哦！看看，這個真的是不一樣喔！這個出家人是真的在修行！』虛老這樣做，目地只是為了讓人恭敬佛法。」

上人說，「這個就是菩薩的發心。他甚至沒有證得三昧，甚至沒有開悟，但是他這樣做了。如果你想出家，這就是你必須做的。」我說：「哦！」這就是我在上人座下的經驗。我誤以為上人想要我出家，這一點我是大錯特錯。後來我才發現，上人不關心你出家、不出家，他關心的是你成佛、不成佛——只有這一點。至於你如何達到這一點不那麼重要，重要的是你能越快成佛越好，他不想跟你浪費時間。

有一天，他告訴我，「你知道，我碰到所有這些人」，當時我們剛跟一位汽車推銷員談完話，這件事真得非常好笑。這個人費勁兒地跟上人推銷一輛車，上人幾乎就準備要簽字了。這時上人突然說：「嗯，我想這輛車太貴了。」最後一分鐘做這種事，簡直把這傢伙氣瘋了。最後這傢伙忍無可忍，就跑出門了。上人在後頭追著他，手裡揮著合同，說：「OK，我簽！我簽了！」

事後上人告訴我，「當我看人，你們都以為我在看那個汽車銷售員，心裡想著那輛車；其實，我一點也不關心車。當我遇見一個人，我不關心他是女人、男人，還是一個孩子、一條狗，還是一隻貓。我先看到的，是他們的佛性；然後下一個念頭，就是我怎樣才能讓他們開智慧，見到他們的自性？」

this guy crazy. And finally, the salesman couldn't take it anymore, and he ran out the door saying "I can't do this anymore!" The Master ran after him waving the paper, "OK. I sign! I sign!"

After that, the Master told me, "When I look at people, everybody thinks I'm looking at this car salesman and thinking about the car. Actually, I don't care about the car. When I see somebody, I don't care if they're a woman, a man, a child, a dog, a cat. I look right at their Buddha-nature first. And then, the next thought I have is, 'How can I get them to open up their wisdom and to see their nature?'"

That's what he does. That's the true mind of a Bodhisattva. Period. And if the best path for a person is to be a novice and then Bhikshu, and that's your path, fine. If it's to be a lay person and be a Dharma Protector, fine. Leaving home is according to each person's nature. The Master is only interested in what is the best way for you to see your true nature and become a Buddha.

He said, "I'm a Buddha-maker." He came here to make Buddhas. Period. The Master said, "Not only did I come here to make Buddhas, but all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the past millennia have been doing this. That's all they come here for. That's what it's all about—nothing else." Pretty straightforward. Hard to take, but that is how it is.

I rarely asked the Master about practice because I knew the Master had true wisdom. I had a little taste of the Master's wisdom. He gave me a little taste. I was very happy with the Master and had no doubts about him. I didn't need to ask, "Master, I'm at this level. I have this false thought. Blah, blah, blah." You hear people talk like that all the time. It's just a lot of nonsense. He just brushes that away because all of that is so unimportant. The important thing is to continue to plug away at your cultivation. You just keep going, like hauling the canoe through the woods.

When the time comes and the really important stuff happens, then the Bodhisattvas will manifest. They zoom in like a laser beam—they know instantly when you're ready to wake up. They're waiting, they know, there's no question. You never know—it could be the Master—it could be any manifestation. They come and help out, when you're ready. You're ready when you're ready, and when you ain't, you ain't.

So we don't have to worry. Even if the Master's physical body isn't here, he'll come to help anyway. This does not apply only to the Master, but all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. I've always felt the Master was one of the "big guys." There are some real "powers that be," these enormous, powerful beings around us—you just don't see them. But once in awhile, you get a little taste. And I've always had that taste about the Master—that he's a big player in this universe. And these players are in a big symphony, a big orchestra.

They all work in accord with each other. It's like a beautiful song.

這是他所做的，這是一個菩薩的真心，僅此而已。如果一個人最好的修行是做一個沙彌，然後成為比丘，那很好，就走這一條路。如果最好的修行是做一個在家人，成為護法，這也很好。出不出家修行，完全是按各人天性決定的，上人只關心什麼是讓你見性成佛最合適的方法。

上人說：「我是造佛的工程師。」他來這裡的目的地是為了造佛，僅此而已。上人說不僅他來這裡造佛，所有的佛菩薩在過去幾千年也一直這樣做，這是他們來這裡的目的。所做的一切，就是為了這個，沒有別的，非常簡單；雖然難以接受，但就是這麼回事。

我很少問上人關於修行的問題，因為我知道上人有真正的智慧。我曾經少少地體驗到上人的智慧，他給我一點點味道嚐嚐。我很高興，對他毫不懷疑。我沒有必要問，師父我現在的功夫怎樣、我有這個妄想、我有那個妄想，七扯八拉的。不過你會常聽到有人這樣問，這都是一大堆廢話。上人只會輕描淡寫地帶過，因為這一切都毫不重要；重要的是，繼續努力修行。你就是修行，像在旱地划船似地，只管著向前。

等時候到了，真正重要的事情要發生時，佛菩薩就會示現。他們會像一束激光射向你——當你開悟的時間到了，他們馬上知道。他們一直等待著這一刻，他們會知道的，這一點是毫無疑問。你永遠不知道，可能會示現為上人，也可能是其他任何的示現。當你準備好了，他們就會來幫忙。你真的準備好的時候，就是準備好了；你沒有準備好的時候，就是沒有準備好。

因此我們不必擔心，即使上人的色身已經不在，他還是會來幫忙的；不只上人是這樣，所有的佛菩薩都是這樣。我一直認為上人是「大人物」之一，在我們身邊有一些真正的大力量，只是我們看不到而已；但是有時也會嚐到一點滋味。對於上人，我一直都有這樣的體會——他是宇宙間的一個超級演奏家。這些演奏家在一個大樂團裡，表演一場大型的交響樂。

他們彼此合作無間，演奏一首優美的歌曲。他們示現世間，隨緣度生，又彼此諧調。這是一種美麗的和聲，這就是菩薩，他們都是彼此諧調的。他們有不同的境界，但是在我們的水平上，怎麼可能去討論菩薩的境界呢！我對此一無所知，所以如果你跟我講七地、八地、十地——我根本不知道你在

They come in, manifest, and help according to conditions. And they're all tuned to each other. It's a beautiful kind of tuning. That's how the Bodhisattvas are, they're just all tuned up. There are different levels, but how can we at our level possibly talk about the different stages of Bodhisattvas. I have no clue. You tell me about 7th stage, 8th stage, 10th stage—I have no idea what you're talking about.

It's like we're the fish at the bottom of the sea. We don't even have any sunlight down here—how much the less the ability to talk about Mount Everest and the top of that mountain. We're just happy to get a little ray of light once in awhile or a sparkle. So eventually, if your conditions are ripe and you're ready, you'll start having experiences in that regard and wake up.

Cultivation is foundation work. It's not fun, but it's foundation work. Sitting meditation, giving up all these things, everything we do—it's all foundation work. You're building a foundation. Foundations are the least fun when you're building a building because it's boring, all concrete. You're digging in the dirt, and you don't see anything. No result other than just the foundation. But you can't have a house of wisdom unless you have a foundation.

So it's like what happened to me, I experienced a seed. A little taste. And it was a real joy. I was so happy for a couple of days and then my mind just closed back up again. I didn't have any foundation. That's why you have precepts, samadhi, and wisdom. If you don't have those three things, nothing's going to stay opened. Even if you really pop open and have a real experience of the unconditioned.

That's why the Master always emphasized leaving home when you're young. I never understood that because everybody thinks, "Oh, you'll get old and retire and you can go and cultivate." The Master said, "No, no, no, to really have a chance at breaking through and getting some real results, leave home when you're young." And then you have this huge foundation you've been working on for all those years when you were young. When your mind is ready to open up, you'll be ready to deal with it and keep it open. Otherwise, it closes up on its own nature.

This is an analogy from a Swami that I thought was very good. It's like you step into a beautiful clear stream. But then you see how filthy you are, and of your own volition, you jump back out on the bank again because you realize you're just too dirty to be there. Nobody forces you out, you do it to yourself. You're just not ready. You haven't cleaned up your act enough to be there. And you can't stay. And nobody's saying you can't. It's just yourself realizing it, and you just can't do it. It's like the saying, "When you go to the hells, nobody holds you down but the weight of your own karma." You're the one holding you down there. It's the same kind of thing.

☞ To be continued

說什麼。

我們就像海底的魚，那裡甚至終年沒有陽光，怎麼可能有本事去討論珠穆朗瑪山和它的峰頂呢？有時照進一絲微弱的光線或是一個閃光，就令我們高興極了。總之，如果你的因緣成熟，你準備好了，你就會開始在那方面有所體驗和覺悟了。

修行，就是在打基礎。這工作一點也不好玩，但這是基礎。參禪打坐、放棄所有、做的每一件事，這些都是在打基礎，你正在打地基。當你蓋房子的時候，打地基是最沒有意思的，因為全部時間就是在灌混凝土，很無聊的。你不停地挖土，看不見任何東西；除了這個地基，沒有其它別的成果。但是沒有這個地基，你不可能成就一幢智慧舍。

就像我所經歷的，我的一個種子成熟了，我嚐到了一點味道，那是真正的喜悅。我高興了幾天，然後我的心又重新關上了，因為那時候我沒有任何基礎。這就是為什麼你必須要修戒、定、慧；如果沒有這三樣東西，即使你靈光乍現，體驗到無為的境界，但終究還是會消逝，無法永駐。

這就是為什麼上人一直強調，要在年輕的時候出家。我一直不理解，因為每個人都認為：「哦，將來老了、退休了，就可以去修行。」上人說，「不、不、不！要想真正有機會突破並得到一些真實的結果，就要趁年輕的時候出家。」因為從年輕就開始修行，所以就擁有比其他更堅固的地基。當你的心準備好要打開時，你就真能應付得來，並且不會再關上了。否則，最後它還是會自己關上的。

我曾經讀過一個Swami打的很好的比喻，它說就像踩進一條美麗清澈的小溪，你卻突然跳上岸，因為你發現自己太髒了，不能待在裡面。沒有人強迫你跳出來，是你自己這樣做的，因為你還沒有準備好。你還沒有把自己打理乾淨到可以站在清水裡的程度，所以你沒有辦法留下來。沒有人說你不能，只是你自己意識到了這一點，所以辦不到。就像我們說的，沒有人讓你進地獄，是你自己的業障拉得你進去的。我們就是把自己拽去地獄，這是一樣的道理。

☞ 待續