



## 明日歸宿源於今日行持

# Tomorrow's Destination Relies on Today's Cultivation

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大約在一個多月前，由於簽證的緣故，我必須回去加拿大。當時正好是溫哥華的金佛聖寺舉行開光典禮和梁皇寶懺，因此有幸回去幫忙並參加法會。來到金佛寺我見到很多非常年長的出家眾，好像沙彌尼的平均年齡在75到80歲左右，比我母親的年齡還大。儘管如此，她們在修行上的毅力和精進的程度，卻一點也不亞於年輕人。

與我同寮房的，是一位最年輕的沙彌尼，今年有70歲了。因為健康的緣故，她白天需要休息，但是她每天都很忙，打掃衛生間、去廚房倒垃圾、幫忙做香燈等等。還有一位80歲的沙彌尼，她每天都會參加早晚課，在很累的時候她也

About a month ago, I went back to Canada because my visa was going to expire. Around this time, Gold Buddha Monastery in Vancouver had an inauguration ceremony and the Emperor Liang repentance, so I could go help and join the ceremonies. At GBM, I met many senior nuns; the novices' average age I guess is between 75 and 80. Although they are all older than my mother, they seem to cultivate with as much diligence as the young ones, and their persistence is extraordinary.

At 70 years of age, my roommate was the youngest novice nun. She has to rest at times throughout the day because of her health problem. However, she's usually very busy cleaning the washroom, dumping the garbage from the kitchen, and helping with the incense and light and so on. Similarly, there's another 80 year old novice nun who attends the daily recitation every day, who tries hard to make all incense during the sessions, even when she's very tired. She told me that two years ago she could

儘量不錯過白天的法會。她告訴我兩年前她還可以在廚房幫忙，但現在由於腿病，已經力不從心，不能再工作了。

對於我這個剛出家不久的沙彌尼來說，她們一絲不苟的修行態度對我很鼓舞。像這樣年齡的老人家，如果是生活在外，一定是在安享晚年，有誰還願意這樣辛苦呢？所以我覺得她們都是菩薩。

梁皇寶懺法會一開始，多年頭痛的老毛病就對我展開猛烈的攻擊。我心想：「也好，吃苦是了苦，藉著法會的力量，我可以多還一點債。」不過這次的發作非常厲害，以至於好幾次都沒有辦法上殿，整個人就倒在房間裏。等到好些的時候，這一天下午我正在清潔佛桌，一位年老的比丘尼緩慢地向我走過來，微笑著用廣東話對我說：「啊！妳頭痛，妳不得平安。」她特別用「平安」這個字眼，這正是我的法名，隨後就遞給我一瓶止痛藥。雖然我不懂廣東話，但是這句我是聽懂了。

然後，她就詢問我的情況。儘管後來她說的話，我一句也沒聽懂，但卻能體會到她對我的那種愛惜，真是又意外又感激。我從沒有告訴過她我生病，平時也沒什麼交談，然而一位老人處處都不方便，能照顧好自己已經很不容易了，卻還能這樣細心地關心晚輩，讓我感覺到：行菩薩道，其實就體現在生活中的小事上。

我們生活在一個團體中，和睦相處非常重要，多一點理解和體諒，少一點挑剔和埋怨；哪怕只是一句同情的話，也常常能給人的心裏帶來溫暖。無論所面對的是什麼樣身份的人，或者是眾人都尊敬的大人物，或者是默默無聞的小角色，我都希望能以最平等的心恭敬和關心他們，因為一切眾生是諸佛的根本，是成就佛道的階梯。

在金佛寺做了早課以後，都會再誦持三遍〈楞嚴咒〉；如果當時我的頭昏沉不舒服，每次誦咒之後，都會立刻得到一種清涼，變得精神一些。誦持〈楞嚴咒〉也是我比較鍾愛的法門之一，這裏就講一個有關〈楞嚴咒〉的真實故事。

大概是在兩、三年前，我還在卡加利分支道場常住。一位常來廟裏做清潔的女居士，有一天突然打電話過來，說以後恐怕不能再來幫忙了，因為她在家裏突然暈倒，到醫院檢查醫生說已經是癌症末期，生命只剩下大約一年的時間。這個消

still work in the kitchen, but now her legs would not hold up.

To a new left-home novice like me, their meticulous attitude on cultivation is full of inspiration. The elders (of this age) who live outside would usually enjoy their lives, but these nuns still put so much effort on work and practice? I think these nuns are all Bodhisattvas.

Throughout the repentance ceremony, a headache that I've experienced for many years attacked me severely. I thought, "Fine. To endure the suffering is to extinguish the suffering." I can repay my debt with the repentance session's power. However, the headache broke so badly that I wasn't even able to stay in the Buddha hall during some of the sessions because I was forced to lie down in my room. After I got better, one afternoon a very old Bihkshuni slowly walked to me while I was cleaning the Buddha's table. She spoke in Cantonese to me with a smile, saying, "Oh, you have a headache, you lost your peace". She chose the word "peace" which is my Dharma name. Then she passed me a bottle of medicine. Although I don't know any Cantonese, I understood.

After that she asked me some questions. I didn't really know what she was saying, but I felt her kindness. I was a little surprised, but I felt thankful. I had never told her that I was sick, and we didn't talk much before. However, she paid attention to me, a junior nun, even when it is already difficult to take care of herself, who is an elderly nun. This made me think that practicing the Bodhisattava's conduct is reflected on small things.

When we live in a community, being in harmony is very important. We always want to share more understanding and forgiveness and to avoid nitpicking and complaining. Just a few words with sympathy will often bring warmth to one's heart. No matter what kind of person I meet, whether it's someone at a high position that everybody respects or an ordinary person that no one knows, I always hope I can show my respect and care for all living beings because they are all the Buddha's root and involved in the progressions that one must take in order to attain the Buddhahood.

After the morning recitation at GBM we usually recite three times of *Shurangama mantra*. If I don't feel comfortable with my head before the recitation, I will usually gain some coolness and energy after the recitation. To recite *Shurangama mantra* is also one of my favorite Dharma doors. Now I'd like to share a true story about it.

When I was the resident at the DRBA Calgary branch about 2 to 3 years ago, one day we got a phone call from a laywoman who often came to clean the monastery. She mentioned that she was afraid that she will not be able to come and help again. She said she passed out at home and after being sent to the hospital, the doctor told her she had terminal cancer. Her life was going to end in about a year. It's really difficult for anyone to take such bad news—she was not even 50 years old!

Right before this laywoman passed away, she loved to meditate

息，對任何人來說都很難接受，她當時還不到50歲。

就在往生前幾個月，當她很累的時候，喜歡靜靜地打坐。但每次眼睛一閉上，眼前就出現很多眾生，有老有少，有西方人也有東方人，他們經過時都會停下來，認真地注視她片刻再離開。睜開眼睛，就什麼也看不見；一閉上眼睛，就見到這種景象，這使她很心煩。

隨後的一天晚上，她做了一個非常清晰的夢。在夢裏她見到兩男一女，三個使者站在她面前對她說：「妳的時間已經到了，跟我們走吧。」她似乎還認識那個女的使者；沒等來得及回應，她就看見自己被帶上手銬和腳鐐，不由自主地跟著他們走。

他們走在一條黃色的道路上，路的兩旁什麼也沒有，只有高高的圍牆（我猜那可能就是黃泉路吧），有一條白色的小狗跟在她身邊；她生前非常喜歡她的狗，甚至曾經花5000塊錢為她的小狗設立永久消災延壽的牌位。

不知走了多久，三個使者消失了，眼前出現兩個做官模樣的人。看得出來，一位官職比較高，另一位比較低。這時她立刻跪下來，懇求能再多給她一些時間，如果讓她再多活三個月，她一定要盡她最大的能力做佛事，供養三寶。這時，官職比較低的那個人看了看她，對另外一個人說：「奇怪，她生前一共誦持了50遍〈楞嚴咒〉，照理說不應該這麼快就來了呀！」那個職位高的人說：「嗯，這裏面有因緣。」

此時，這位居士就拼命磕頭哀求他們，那個職位低的人似乎也希望滿她的願；於是職位比較高的人，猶豫了片刻，從上衣兜裏掏出一張金色閃閃發光的小紙片，一揮手，小紙片便開始燃燒，化為美麗的金色火焰；轉眼間，這位居士發現自己的手銬和腳鐐都不見了，這兩個人也不見了；於是，她開始拼命地奔跑，從來沒有跑得這樣快，同時也感覺到身後一群眾生緊緊地追著她。終於，她在掙扎中甦醒，就這樣又多活了不到三個月，最後在微微的痛苦中往生。

寺裏很多人聽了這位居士的故事，都有點

when she was very tired. But as soon as she closed her eyes, lots of spirits appeared in front of her—old ones and young ones, Westerners and Asians. When they passed by, they all stopped and stared at her face for a moment. Opening her eyes, she could see nothing, closing her eyes, she saw these spirits appear. She got pretty annoyed.

After that she had a vivid dream one night. She dreamt of three messengers standing in front of her and saying, “Your time is up, come along”. With no time to respond, she saw herself following them in handcuffs and shackles.

In the scene, they are walking on a yellow path. There's nothing beside the road but very high wall fence. (I guess that's what we called “the yellow creek road”.) A white dog is going with her. She really loved her dog that she even spent 5,000 dollars to set up a long life plaque for it.

After a while, the three messengers disappeared and two people that look like some officials come. It seems like one of them is of higher position than another. The laywoman immediately kneels and begs them to give her more time to live. She says if she can have three more months, she will put all her effort in Buddhism and make offerings to the Triple Jewel. Now the low official looks at her and says to the high official, “Strange enough, this woman recited 50 times of Shurangama mantra in her life, she shouldn't have been sent to here so quickly!” The high official says: “Hmm, there are some cause and conditions in this case”.

While the laywoman tries her best to beg them, it looks like the low official would like to extend her life. The man at higher position hesitates for a minute, and then takes out a piece of shiny golden slip paper from his pocket. While shaking his hand, the slip gets burnt right away into a beautiful golden flame. She notices her shackles are gone at once, as well as these two men, and then she starts to run. Although it's just a dream, she realizes she has never run so fast. At the same time she can feel a lot of spirits are chasing her. Finally she woke up from the struggle. She lived for less than three months after that and died with little pain.

Many people were alerted after hearing the story, and would like to add Shurangama mantra recitation to their daily homework. Well, it was just a dream, and no one knows what really happened. But we would rather think it's true than ignore it. What we can ensure is that *Shurangama mantra* can definitely restore the positive energy between the heaven and earth. It can also extend proper Dharma and bring infinite benefits to all the living beings. Therefore, if we sincerely recite this mantra for everyone, we are creating ineffable merit

驚異，隨後自動地把〈楞嚴咒〉加入日常的功課裏。當然這只是一個夢境，事實究竟怎樣我們也不知道；但是「寧可信其有，不可信其無」，可以肯定的是，〈楞嚴咒〉可以補天地的正氣，可以令正法久住，對一切眾生有無盡的利益。因此，只要以至誠懇切的心持誦〈楞嚴咒〉，並迴向給一切眾生，這種功德是無法用言語來形容的，也是現在這個世界最需要的。

所以萬佛寶殿每星期六的〈楞嚴咒〉法會，對我來說特別珍貴。有時輪到要去廚房幫忙，只要做工不遲到，哪怕只是來誦一遍就走，我也覺得得到巨大的法益；因為大眾一同修行的力量，總是比我單獨做功課的力量大很多。試想這個世界上有幾十億人口，有多少人能踏進這個大門參加這裏的法會？而我自己到底已經輪迴了多少個大劫，今天才有機會與大眾一同修行呢？所以法會的每一分每一秒，都無比珍貴。我總是提醒自己：「這是百千萬劫難遭難遇的。誰知道錯過了今天，明天我又在哪裏？」

過去幾年，我常常有機會去醫院和殯儀館助念，送走很多垂死和已經往生的人，其中不少人都是佛教徒。當他們在生的時候，如果你問他：「要不要去極樂世界呀？」每一個都毫不猶豫地說：「當然想去！」甚至有的會說：「如果現在可以去，我願意現在就走。」但是就我所經歷和所看到的，幾乎所有知道自己得了絕症的人，儘管病情已經無法挽回，最後的時刻就在眼前，但是想要活下去的念頭，卻總是勝過要往生西方的意願，求生的本能取代了一切。其實，為臨終的一刻做好安排，不等於放棄治療，而是在心理上有所準備。當見到人們被無情地推向死亡，而不是充滿信心地面對死亡時，我都感到很惋惜。

這個五濁惡世充滿諸多不如意，但我們似乎總捨不得它，也許是牽掛親人，雖然常聽人說「六親眷屬就是冤親債主」；也許是牽掛財產，雖然總是表白「錢財是身外之物」；也許是特別寶貝這個身體，雖然常常說「這是個臭皮囊」！所謂「理可頓悟，事須漸修」，因此在佛法中我願意明白更多的道理，開發多一點智慧，因為學習佛法的目的，就是要將之付諸實踐，才能算是得到真正的寶貝。

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and virtue, things that the world truly needs.

The Shurangama recitation ceremony on Saturday is precious to me. Sometimes it's my turn to go help in the kitchen. As long as I am not late for my duty, I would also come to the Buddha Hall to recite the mantra, even if it's only for a short period of time. I feel as if I've always obtained great benefit from this Dharma because the merit and virtue from the assembly is much more powerful than my own practice. For example, imagine that there are billions of people living in the world. How many of them can actually step into the hall to attend the ceremony? Now that I've been able to practice the way with everyone here, who knows how many eons I have reincarnated to get this opportunity again. Therefore, every second of the Dharma assembly counts. I keep reminding myself that this is something hard to encounter in hundreds and thousands of kalpas. If I miss it today, will I get the opportunity tomorrow?

In the past few years, I often had opportunities to help with the recitations at hospitals or funeral homes. I have seen lots of deceased and dying people, many of them who were Buddhists. Before they passed away, they would certainly tell you that they'd love to be reborn to the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss. Some might've even said that they were ready to leave if they could go there now. However, from what I've seen, most people with incurable diseases are more eager to extend their lives than to go to the Pure Land. Even though it's pretty obvious that death is very close, the instinct of survival dominates their mind. Of course, to get ready for the last minute doesn't mean to stop medical treatment and give up the life. It's more of mental preparation. I was so regretful when I saw people being pushed cruelly to death instead of facing it with confidence.

There are a lot of things we are not happy with in this Saha world, but more or less it seems we don't want to move apart from it. Perhaps we would miss our beloved relatives, although we hear people say that "relatives are creditors". Perhaps we would have concerns about our properties although we have always heard the belief that "money is just some material". Perhaps we pay too much attention to our bodies although we often say, "This is a skin bag." "When we hear some theories, we may understand it right away, however, we have to keep on practicing step by step to achieve accomplishment". I would like to understand more principles in the Buddhadharma, and to let more wisdom manifest, because the purpose of all the study on Buddha Dharma is to put theory into practice, only that counts as attaining the real treasure..

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