

萬佛聖城慶祝浴佛節

The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas celebrates Bathing Buddha's Day



單超文 / 譯 Written and Translated by Chao Shan

(續封面內頁)

是日早課過後，比丘與比丘尼各自誦戒，居士約兩百人受持「八關齋戒」。僧俗二眾共同「以戒為師」，為浴佛節掀開序幕。清晨七時不到，萬佛聖城三拱山門前已響起「南無本師釋迦牟尼佛」的唱誦聲，法師、居士近兩百人從山門三步一拜，直拜到祖師殿。於此同時，佛殿裏則是念誦《普賢行願品》，從普賢十大願王中，一窺成就世尊功德的行門。

上午八時至十時是普佛與浴佛，七座浴佛臺同時提供給四眾弟子浴佛。中間最大的浴佛臺保留給年長法師與高齡居士浴佛。來自舊金山灣區佛利蒙市的91歲張阿罕，在女兒陳淑慧陪同下，一早就趕來萬佛聖城。張阿罕由義工攙扶至浴佛台前，自己浴佛，不假他力。浴完佛很開心，滿臉煥發光采。

比丘近佛法師在午齋中講法表示：「剛才參加浴佛，大家顯得特別清淨，法喜充滿。浴佛的目的，在沐浴內心的佛性，把內心的塵垢貪瞋癡三毒息滅，智慧增長，就會有佛性的光明。大家可得大清淨，過大安樂的生活。」

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Bhikshus and bhikshunis recited their respective precepts after morning recitation and almost 200 laypeople took the Eight Vegetarian Precepts. The sangha and laity both “took the precepts as their teacher” as a prelude to the Bathing the Buddha Ceremony. The chanting of “Namo Fundamental Teacher Shakyamuni Buddha” could be heard before 7am at the Mountain Gate where nearly 200 monastics and laypeople made a three-step-one-bow pilgrimage to the Buddha Hall. Simultaneously, others gathered in the Buddha Hall to recite *The Chapter on the Practices and Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva*. From hearing about the Ten Great Vows of the Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, people could have a peek of the practices leading to Buddhahood.

The Universal Bowing and Bathing the Buddha ceremonies took place from eight to ten. There were seven altars for bathing the Buddha. The central altar was reserved for elders. Ninety-one-year-old Ah-Han Chang came from Fremont, California. Her daughter Susan Chen brought her to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas early in the morning. A volunteer helped Ah-Han Chang walk to the central altar, but she managed to bathe the Buddha statue by herself without any help. After bathing the Buddha, her face was glowing with happiness.

Bhikshu Jin Fo gave a Dharma talk at lunch. He said, “People looked pure and filled with Dharma bliss when bathing the Buddha this morning. The purpose of bathing Buddha is to cleanse our inherent nature and eradicate the defilements of greed, hatred and stupidity so that our wisdom will increase and so that we will experience the brightness of the Buddha nature, obtain great purity, and lead a life of great peace and happiness.”

比丘尼恒輔法師引用《灌洗佛形象經》經文說：「十方諸佛皆用四月八日夜半時生……佛言，所以用四月八日者，以春夏之際殃罪悉畢，萬物普生毒氣未行，不寒不熱時氣和適。」恒輔法師勉勵大家浴佛時，效法於佛，不要忘記佛恩，並藉此消罪障、長福慧、成菩提。

萬佛聖城方丈恒律法師歡迎大家回到萬佛聖城這個家，並指出佛陀如大醫王，佛法像藥一樣，能醫治我們身心種種問題。恒律法師問道：「佛法會不會像藥品一樣，有過期問題？」接著提出答案：「佛法的過期日不像一般的藥，註明在標籤上；而是在於我們是否實行佛法。如果實行，就不會有過期問題；如果不實行，就有過期問題。」

午齋後，大眾有機會瞻仰釋迦牟尼佛舍利、虛雲老和尚舍利、以及宣公上人的舍利。另外還有三皈五戒與放生法會。這次放生法會重獲自由的是數十隻鳥類，原本可能成為饕餮客的食物，但在浴佛節這天，牠們全部喜獲重生。三皈五戒與放生法會舉行到一半，原本是涼爽宜人的氣候，忽然來了一場甘霖，彷彿佛陀降生時的九龍吐水。這場雨只下了十分鐘，法會結束時，戶外早已轉變成陽光普照的好天氣。

五歲的鄺雪莉跟著姨婆嚴玲來浴佛，看到孔雀很開心，更高興的是看到多隻孔雀同時開屏，令她忍不住說：「這裏好美！」

住在德州休士頓的清黛居士當年曾協助宣公上人安置越南難民，她最近夢見萬佛聖城正在進行多項工程，睜眼閉眼總見萬佛聖城浮現眼前，因此專程前來參加浴佛節；跟30餘年前的環境相較，她感覺聖城如今更加光明，能量也更强。

來自舊金山的85歲李玉萍則認為來浴佛的人，在她心目中，都是阿彌陀佛。浴佛節這天，放眼望去數百人同時浴佛，她不禁歡喜讚歎：「萬佛聖城有這麼多阿彌陀佛！」

Bhikshuni Heng Fu quoted the Sutra text from the *Sutra of Bathing the Buddha Image*: “All of the Buddhas of the ten directions were born at midnight on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month...The Buddha said the reason Buddhas are born on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month that it is between spring and summer, all offenses can be eradicated, myriads of things are growing and the poisonous air is not yet prevalent. It is neither too cold nor too hot so the weather and timing are right.” Dharma Master Heng Fu encouraged everyone to emulate the Buddha when bathing the Buddha and not to forget the Buddha’s kindness. She also suggested we all take this opportunity to eradicate our karmic obstacles, increase our blessings and wisdom, and achieve Bodhi.

Dharma Master Heng Lyu, the Abbot of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, welcomed everyone home. He noted that the Buddha is like the great King of Medicine and the Buddhadharma is like the medication which can cure a variety of our physical and mental illnesses. Dharma Master Heng Lyu asked, “Does the Buddhadharma have an expiration date like worldly medicine?” He then answered, “The Buddhadharma medicine’s expiration date depends entirely on our practice. If we practice, the medicine of Buddhadharma will not expire. If we don’t practice, then it will expire.”

After lunch, there was an opportunity to view the sharira of Shakyamuni Buddha, Master Hsu Yun and the Venerable Master Hua. There were also a transmission of the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts as well as a Liberation of Life Ceremony. Dozens of birds were set free during the Liberation of Life Ceremony. They could have been gourmand’s food, but instead they could happily enjoy their new life on the Buddha’s birthday. Halfway through the Three Refuges and Five Precepts transmission and the Liberation of Life Ceremony, it started to rain, as if the nine dragons, who brought rain when Shakyamuni Buddha was born, were sprinkling water on everyone.

Shirley Kuan, a five-year-old girl, accompanied her grand aunt Ling Yen to bathe the Buddha. She was happy to see peacocks, and even happier when she saw many peacocks open their feathers at the same time. She said, “This place is beautiful!”

Mrs. Dai Thanh who lives in Houston, Texas, joined the Venerable Master Hua in helping Vietnamese refugees many years ago. Recently, she dreamed that quite a few construction projects were going on at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. She could still see the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas whether her eyes were closed or open. She decided to make a special trip to City of Ten Thousand Buddhas for the Bathing Buddha Ceremony. She feels the environment here is brighter and has a higher energy level than 30 years ago.

Eighty-five-year-old Yu-Ping Lee of San Francisco said that, in her mind, the people who come to bathe the Buddha are all Amitabha Buddhas. When she looked out at the Bathing Buddha ceremony, she saw hundreds of people there and she praised them with delight, “So many Amitabha Buddhas are here at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas!”