

Dharma from Historic Events

從歷史談佛法

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We are approaching to the hundredth birthday of the Venerable Master. I will talk about the history of China, and, in particular Manchuria, during the time Venerable Master was there. It was a time of great suffering for China. At the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, we live in a place free from war. Perhaps, however, if we think of the suffering that people have undergone from war, we will be more motivated to cultivate and put an end to suffering. We do not suffer much now, but the Saha world is a dangerous place. There's no guarantee that we will not endure great suffering in the future. The only way to avoid this is to end birth and death.

In 1931, the Japanese military invaded China. The soldiers stayed in China until 1945. In those fourteen years, the Japanese army went deeper and deeper into China. At that time, they killed three million soldiers and twenty million civilians. The Japanese islands are small, and they cannot feed their population without importing food. At first the Japanese tried to take over a part of Manchuria. They sent soldiers, and then they sent farmers to provide food for Japan. There were two military factions in Japan. One wanted to battle Russia, the other one wanted to control all of Asia. There was no other faction. The military all wanted to go to war. The only question was, which country to fight with?

The faction that wanted domination of Asia won over the anti-Russian

上人的百歲誕辰將至，所以我想談一談中國歷史，特別是上人在東北的那段期間。當時中國面臨巨大的苦難，我們現在在萬佛聖城，生活在一個沒有戰爭的地方，如果可以把那些經歷戰亂的人們所遭受的痛苦放在心裡，或許我們會更發心修行，了生脫死。我們現在並沒有太多苦難，但是娑婆世界是一個危險的地方，誰也無法保證永遠平安。了生脫死是唯一避險的方法。

1931年，日本侵略中國，直到1945年才從中國撤軍。在這14年中，日軍越來越深入中國，三百萬的中國士兵和兩千萬的老百姓在這段期間被殺害。日本是很小的島國，如果不依賴進口，實在無法供給國內人民的需求。最初日軍試圖佔領中國東北的一

faction. One of the men from this faction named Tojo Hideki became prime minister. There was no provocation from China. In 1937, the Japanese found that a single soldier was missing. They sent soldiers into Chinese Manchuria to search for him. They never pulled their soldiers out. They sent more and more troops. It turned out that the soldier was in his barracks the entire time.

In 1941, Japan had another problem. The United States was alarmed at the Japanese invasion of China and refused to sell oil to Japan. Japan needed to import oil and many other materials. Japan had two choices: they could withdraw from China and restore trade with the United States or they could push farther into Asia and seize the resources they needed. The Japanese chose to expand their invasion of Asia.

In December of 1942, the Japanese made a mistake that would put an end to their ambitions. They thought that bombing the American naval base at Pearl Harbor would intimidate the Americans and keep them out of the war in Asia. It was like whacking a hornets' nest to intimidate the hornets.

In 1945, Japan surrendered to the United States and pulled its troops out of China and other parts of Asia. Japan gave up Taiwan and Korea, as well. It had already lost the Philippines and all of the Pacific Islands. Before it surrendered, two million Japanese civilians died from bombs. Three hundred thousand died in a few days from two atomic bombs. If it had not surrendered, there would have been much worse suffering to endure. The United States was about to transfer its huge fleet of bombers from Germany, which had already surrendered.

The Japanese suffered greatly in 1945. Could this have been the nation's retribution for what they did in Asia? The Japanese left China in 1945, but the suffering of the Chinese was not over. There was a civil war. It was said that the nationalist army was too weak from fighting off the Japanese to win the civil war. Karl Marx said, "Religion is the opiate of the masses." His followers sought to get rid of religion and put worship of the government in its place.

A religion is only good as its people, and good people can be part of any religion. Religion attracts good people who see how to use it to benefit people. But a system that rejects all religions is cutting itself off from the possibility of spiritual benefit. The Cloud Gate Incident tried to kill the Venerable Hsu Yun. When the system that was unable to recognize why its people hatched the seeds of failure, it is not surprising that tens of millions of people starved to death under the Marxist regime.

Freedom of religion is very important. With freedom of religion outside ways can all flourish, but the proper Dharma can be heard as well. We can only hope that people will discover the Proper Dharma as well, cherish it and put it to good use in their lives.

In November of 1937, the Japanese took the city of Shanghai.

部份，他們先派遣軍隊進入，之後派遣農夫到那裡去開墾，以提供日本國內所需。日軍內部分成兩派，一派想與俄國作戰，另一派想統治整個亞洲。兩派都想發動戰爭，問題就在於：要跟哪個國家作戰？

最後，想統治整個亞洲的那一派獲勝，其中的一個成員——東條英機，後來成為日本的首相。中國當時並無任何挑釁，然而1937年日軍宣稱一名士兵失蹤，就派遣軍隊到中國東北進行搜尋。日本軍隊不但沒有撤出中國，相反地，還不斷派遣更多的軍隊到中



國。最後發現，這名宣稱失蹤的士兵，其實一直都在他的軍營裡。

1941年，日本面臨另一個問題。當時美國警覺日本意圖侵略中國，於是拒絕出售石油給日本。日本所需的石油以及其他天然資源都仰賴進口，因此得面臨兩個選擇：一個是從中國撤軍，重建與美方的貿易；另一個就是侵略亞洲更多的地方，以奪取他們所需要的能源。

1942年12月，日本犯了一個錯誤，導致他們的野心提早結束。日本以為轟炸珍珠港的美國海軍基地能對美國造成威脅，而阻止他們干預亞洲戰事。但是此一舉動，等於是直搗黃蜂的窩。

1945年，日本向美國投降，準備將軍隊從中國和亞洲其他地區撤出，同時也放棄台灣和韓國。在投降之前，日本有兩百萬的老百姓死於炸彈襲擊，其中有三十萬人是在兩顆

By that time, the city was mostly just piles of rubble. The Japanese had been bombing it all summer and fall. Countless civilians had died in the bombing, but the Chinese, nevertheless put up a fierce resistance. The Japanese losses were much higher than they had calculated.

The attitude of the Japanese was a problem. They delighted in the victories in Asia; they delighted in the bombing of Pearl Harbor. They glorified violence. Now, I am afraid that in this country there are many movies that glorify violence. They teach the viewers to have very deviant views. Even now in politics, there is much hatred.



One side says “lock her up” the other side says, “impeach him!”

We Buddhists see everyone as our close relatives. We do not wish anyone to suffer even if they hate us or hate our country. We hope that everyone can free themselves from hatred, anger, and the desire for revenge. We do not take sides in any war, political conflict, or argument. We take the side of Guan Yin, we want to save everyone from suffering. We plan to go to the Pure Land, and along the way, we plan to help every living being join us. If we fall short of this ideal, we repent of our bad habits and vow to be more pure in the future.

This is a tale of the incredible suffering that people



原子彈爆炸後的短短幾天內死亡。如果日本不投降，遭受的災難將更嚴峻，因為當時德國已經投降，美國正準備將巨型轟炸機轉往其他戰場。

日本人在1945年遭受極大的痛苦，是否是這個國家對亞洲所做惡行的報應？1945年日軍從中國撤出，但是中國人的噩夢並沒有因此結束。中國內戰爆發，國民黨軍隊經歷與日軍的長期抗戰後元氣大傷，無力平定內亂。卡爾馬克思主張：「宗教是人們的精神鴉片。」然而馬克思主義的追隨者，試圖以崇拜政府來取代宗教信仰。

宗教對人心有正面的影響力，任何宗教裡頭都有善良的人，這些人都是被宗教的正面能量所吸引。一個排斥宗教的社會制度，等於是斷絕人民汲取心靈資糧的機會。雲門事變企圖殺死虛雲老和尚，一個無法察覺人民走上絕路的馬克思政權國家，最後導致了成千上萬人民餓死。發生這種結局，其實一點也不令人意外。

宗教自由非常重要。宗教自由雖然讓外道壯大，但是人們也有機會聽聞正法。我們只能希望人們可以發現正法，珍惜正法，並且善加運用於人生。

1937年11月，日軍佔領上海，整個城市宛如廢墟。整個夏天和秋天，日軍不斷地轟炸上海，無數老百姓因此喪命。然而中國頑強抵抗，日軍的損失遠超過他們所預期。

日本的心態是個問題。他們對於侵略亞洲勝利感到高興，他們對於轟炸珍珠港感到高興，他們崇尚暴力。現在我擔心我們這個國家，很多的電影也崇尚暴力，灌輸觀眾非常偏斜的知見；甚至在政治圈裡也有很多的仇恨，一黨說：「把她關起來！」另一黨說：「我們要彈劾總統！」

身為佛教徒，我們把每一個人都當成自己的親人。即使有人討厭或仇恨我們的國家，我們也不希望他們

have undergone. We should not think “I am glad this country won, or that country won,” we should think “this is terrible that any of this had to happen to anyone.”

After Shanghai, the Japanese took Nanking. They deliberately slaughtered the civilian population. I will not go into detail about the suffering of the men and the women who were tortured. I will only say I do not know how it could have been any worse. Prisoners of war were taken to a special concentration camp. There, the Japanese used them as guinea pigs for scientific experiments. How long can a man live without food? without water? After he has been shot, how long does it take a man to freeze to death?

Isn't science wonderful? It is so objective and rational. It is so precise and repeatable. When I went to college, I was told that the previous year that there had been a crazy student. He had let all of the rats out of the cages and spoiled everyone's experiments. Now that I look back on it, I think that the student that liberated those rats, was the only sane person in the whole experimental biology department.

There is a better science- it is a science of suffering. It is a Buddhist science. You get your data by quieting your mind and looking within. Am I less hateful? Do I have fewer impure thoughts? Am I less greedy? Less selfish? Is my suffering less? Do I need to repent of my bad habits to decrease my suffering? Am I closer to the Pure Land?

I have made a little progress in this science. I have realized how very far I have to go, how many thoughts need to be purified. There is a lot of work that I need to do, but it is the only work that is worth doing. I think many of you have made more progress than I have. We can all rejoice in those who are sincere and vigorous in their cultivation.

It turns out that we have to rely on ourselves and our own cultivation. We can't look to government to solve our problems. When the Japanese invaded China in 1931, China appealed to the League of Nations that had been formed after World War I. All the major nations except the United States were a part of it. The League of Nations condemned Japan for its invasion. Then, Japan withdrew from the League of Nations, and that was the end of that.

The Venerable Master said, “The Ten Dharma Realms are not beyond a single thought.” When the Japanese invaded, the people of China found out how very close the hells can be. When you're in a pure way place, the Pure Land is not far away. Amitufo! 囍

受苦；我們希望每個人都能從仇恨、憤怒和報復中解脫。在任何政治或戰爭的衝突爭論中，我們不支持任何一方。我們站在觀世音菩薩這一邊，我們希望眾生都能離苦，希望自己往生極樂，也願有情同生極樂。如果我們做不到這些，就誠心懺悔這些不好的習氣，發願將來更為清淨。

今天談的是人類曾經經歷的一場浩劫，而不是慶幸哪一個國家戰勝或戰敗。我們只有一個想法，那就是這些苦難無論發生在任何人身上，都是很可怕的。

繼上海之後，日軍佔領了南京，並且屠殺中國人民。對於當時男人、女人所受到的折磨，我不願多做描述，只想說：「很難想像有比這個更糟的情況。」戰俘被送進特殊的集中營，被當成科學實驗的白老鼠對待，例如一個人沒有食物可以活多久？一個人沒有水喝可以活多久？人被槍擊後可以活多久？凍死一個人需要多久時間？

科學不是很完美嗎？既客觀又理性，既精確又具可重覆性。大學時代有人告訴我，前一年有個學生發瘋了，把所有實驗室的老鼠從籠裡放出來，毀掉所有進行的實驗。現在回想起來，我覺得把老鼠放出來的那個學生，是整個生物系裡唯一頭腦清楚的人。

世界上有一種更完美的科學—受苦的科學，也就是佛教科學。透過禪定和觀照，收集數據資料：看看自己的瞋心有沒有少一點？雜念有沒有少一點？貪心有沒有少一點？自私心有沒有少一點？痛苦有沒有少一點？是不是要好好懺悔自己的壞習氣，才能少受一點苦？看看自己有沒有離極樂世界近一點？

在鑽研這門佛教科學裡，我有一點小小的進展。我意識到自己離目標還很遠，還需要清淨自己的意念。我知道還有很多需要努力的地方，但這是唯一值得我努力去做的事。我相信很多人在這方面進步得比我多很多，我們隨喜這些人修行的誠心與精進。

政府無法解決我們的問題，我們必須靠自己腳踏實地的修行。第一次世界大戰之後，除了美國以外，世界的幾大強國組成了一個國際聯盟。1931年日本入侵中國，中國向國際聯盟提出抗議，因此國聯發表聲明譴責日本對中國的侵略。日本退出了國聯，但中國的問題依然無解。

上人說：「十法界不離一念心。」日軍侵略中國的時候，對中國人來說，地獄就在眼前。當身處在一個清淨的道場，極樂世界就離我們不遠了。阿彌陀佛！囍