

佛法真實不虛

How True and Actual the Buddhadharma Is!

By Xu Sufang English Translated by Zhu Yi

徐素芳 文 朱憚 英譯



我的名字叫徐素芳，今年八十五歲。我的同修徐恒富原來在台灣「中國廣播公司」工作，1966年他受聘於「美國之音」，便帶著全家從台灣搬來美國東岸維吉尼亞州，至今已逾半個世紀。同修在美國之音工作了四十一年退休，我們在此養大了五個孩子，並曾經同時經營二個餐館及一個禮品店，忙忙碌碌的過了一輩子。我們曾經收入不斐，也曾經差點破產，人生跌宕起伏，回首前塵如夢，在「忙、茫、盲」中不知不覺已走到了尾聲，雖然自己並不覺得自己老了，然而齒牙動搖，步履蹣跚，卻是事實。

My name is Xu Sufang. I am 85 years old. My husband and fellow cultivator, Xu Hengfu, used to work at Broadcasting Corporation of China (BCC) in Taiwan. In 1966, he was hired by Voice of America (VOA). Half a century has passed since our entire family moved from Taiwan to Virginia on the East Coast of the United States. My husband worked at the VOA for 41 years before he retired. We led a busy life, raising five kids whilst running two restaurants and a gift shop at the same time. We had times with a sizable income but also times when we were on the verge of bankruptcy — thus, we have gone through so many ups and downs in life. In retrospect, every memory was just like a dream. While living such a busy, purposeless, and directionless life, we had unwittingly come to our final years. Although I do not really feel old, there is no way I can ignore my faltering steps and loose teeth.

Over three and a half years ago, my husband didn't feel well. A medical examination revealed that he was in the final stage of lung

三年半多前，同修身體不舒服，一檢查發現罹患了肺癌第四期，醫生說最多只能活四個月。我們的牙醫高大夫知道後就給了我一本《觀世音菩薩普門品》並帶我們到「華嚴精舍」接觸佛法，她同時給了我們一個念佛計數器，教我們念「阿彌陀佛」聖號。沒想到這一殊勝的因緣竟帶給同修無上的福報，使他能臨終無障礙，並出現瑞相。我親眼看到許多異象，見證佛法真實不虛，因此願意將同修往生的經歷與大眾分享，藉以增長佛友的菩提心。

從高醫生那兒拿了經書後，我每天必誦〈普門品〉、《心經》、〈七佛滅罪真言〉及〈大悲咒〉，每念一遍就在紙上畫條線，做為記錄；同修和我並每日不間斷的誦念「阿彌陀佛」聖號。同修睡著後，我就跪在他的床前念佛，每天至少念數百聲以上。經過醫生的診治加上阿彌陀佛的加持，同修竟然多活了三年多。期間他住院多次，上個(十)月他說不願意再住院，要住家裡，我就在一樓房內面北的窗前為他安了一張床。高醫生從佛堂拿了「大悲水」來給他喝，從此他就不願意喝別的了，只要喝大悲水。

同修往生前一個星期，有天忽然對我說：「西方三聖來接我了，我準備要走了。」我聽了沒當回事，只是照著高醫生的話叮囑他：「除了阿彌陀佛，誰來接你你都不可以跟他走。」同修聽進去了。有天，他說做了一個夢，有個大鬍子的人叫他不要吃飯。之後他就常說很累，不想吃飯。我為了他不吃飯還和他鬧過幾次彆扭，他也開始頻繁的要求上廁所，但因為吃的少，去了廁所又沒什麼東西出來。

cancer. The doctor said he could only live for another four months at most. After learning this, our dentist Dr. Gao gave me a copy of *Guanyin Bodhisattva's Universal Door Chapter*, and also took us to Avatamsaka Vihara to be in touch with the Buddhadharm. At the same time, she gave us a recitation tracker and taught us how to chant the sacred name of Amitabha Buddha. Little did we know that this unique condition ended up bringing supreme blessings to my husband. At the end of his life, he left without encountering any hindrances, and just as he had vowed, he was received by the Three Sages of the Western Pure Land who led him to be reborn in that land. Having seen many extraordinary phenomena, I witnessed that the validity and true efficacy of the Buddhadharm. Therefore, I want to share my husband's story of rebirth with the great assembly in hopes of strengthening the Bodhi resolve of our fellow Buddhist practitioners.

After getting the Sutra books from Dr. Gao, I recited *The Universal Door Chapter*, *The Heart Sutra*, *The Mantra of Seven Buddhas for Eradicating Offenses*, and *The Great Compassion Mantra* every single day. After each recitation, I marked a line on the paper to keep track of how many recitations I had done as a record. In addition, my husband and I also chanted the sacred name of Amitabha Buddha every day. Each day after my husband fell asleep, I knelt next to his bed, chanting the Buddha's name several hundred times. Thanks to the doctor's treatment and the help of Amitabha Buddha, my husband managed to live three more years. During that time, he was hospitalized many times. Last month (October), he said that he no longer wanted to stay in the hospital and wanted to stay at home. Hence, I set up a bed for him in a room on the first floor next to a window facing north. Dr. Gao brought him the Great Compassion Water from the temple to drink. Since then, he didn't want to drink anything else.

One week before my husband passed away, he suddenly told me: "The Three Sages of the Western Pure Land are coming to receive me, I'm ready to go." Hearing that, I didn't take it seriously, but reminded him of Dr. Gao's words: "Except for Amitabha Buddha, do not follow anyone else coming to take you." My husband listened, heeding the advice. One day, he said he dreamt about a bearded man who told him to stop eating. After that, he often said he was very tired and didn't want to eat. I even argued with him several times over his not eating. He also began to request to go to the restroom more frequently, but because of

十月十七日晚上，女兒回來了，她說：「媽媽，妳都沒睡覺，妳去休息，我看著爸爸。」我於是回房休息。半夜三、四點鐘的時候，我忽然醒了，起來去看看同修，一摸，手是冰涼的，就和女兒說：「妳爸爸走了。」女兒一聽就哭了起來。我想到高醫生的囑咐：「不可以哭，哭會讓亡者不安，走不了。」於是對女兒說：「到那邊去，不要在這裡哭。」女兒就到另外一個房間去哭了。

我就坐到同修床前，望著窗外，口中一直念「阿彌陀佛」、「阿彌陀佛」……不停的念。窗子是開著的，忽然間，我聽到很大一聲「啪」的一響聲，我抬頭望向窗外，一串閃電像似一顆金星伴著金色的閃光從天上「刷！」的降下來。我覺得很怪，心裡想：「好奇怪呀！今天又沒有下雨，怎麼會有閃電？」不一會兒，窗子那兒就亮了，只見窗上一片如電光般的白色亮光，非常的亮，使得窗外的樹都看不見了。我心裡直犯嘀咕，覺得怎麼這麼怪？但腦子很快就想到了，直覺告訴我，這是天開了，阿彌陀佛來接同修走了。我就告訴孩子：阿彌陀佛來接你爸爸了。孩子自然不信。這白色亮光停留了約三、五分鐘才消失。我叮囑孩子不可動爸爸，幫他蓋上了蓮花被和蓮花枕頭，就坐在床前，不吃、不喝、不停的念「阿彌陀佛」……足足念了二十五個小時。

說起我最早的佛緣，應該是在十一、二歲左右。那時住在南京，有一天我站在池塘邊看魚，來了一位老和尚，他一看到我就指著我說：「這個孩子脾氣太壞了，但是有福氣。」我的脾氣確實是很不好，但我確實是有福氣，母親和同修都很寵我，也幸虧是嫁給同修，否則我的壞脾氣不知會離多少次婚。2009年我和同修踏進馬

the amount he ate, he had almost nothing to pass.

On the evening of October 17, 2019, our daughter came back. She said, "Mom, you didn't sleep at all. Let me look after Dad while you take a rest." So I went to my room to rest. At about three or four o'clock in the morning, I suddenly woke up. I got up to check on my husband. When I touched his hands, they were ice cold. I told my daughter: "Your dad has left." Hearing that, my daughter started to cry. Remembering Dr. Gao's words, I said: "Don't cry. It will disturb Dad - preventing him from leaving peacefully." Then I said to my daughter: "Go over there. Don't cry here." So my daughter went to another room.

I then sat next to my husband's bed, and kept chanting Amitabha Buddha's name while looking out the window. The window was open. Suddenly, I heard a loud bang. As I raised my head and looked out the window, I saw a chain of lightning that seemed like a golden star with golden flashes streaming down from the sky. I felt that this was bizarre, and thought to myself: "This is quite strange! It isn't raining today, how come there's lightning?" Shortly after this, the window was lit up brilliantly as a sheet of white bright light shone on the window, just like lightning, it was so dazzling that even the trees outside the window weren't visible. Many thoughts rushed through my mind, wondering why this strange event was occurring? But very quickly I realized through intuition that this must be Heaven opening up with Amitabha Buddha taking my husband away. Then I told my children: "Amitabha Buddha is coming to take your dad to the Pure Land." Of course my children wouldn't believe it. This white bright light stayed there for three to five minutes before it disappeared. I told my children not to touch their dad. I covered him with the lotus blanket and lotus pillow, sat next to his bed, and then chanted Amitabha Buddha for a total of 25 hours, nonstop, without eating or drinking.

My earliest connection with Buddhism was when I was about 11 or 12 years old. I lived in Nanjing, China at the time. One day, while I stood next to a pond looking at the fish, an old monk saw me and said: "This child has a very poor temperament, but she has good fortune." My temper is indeed very bad, but I actually am very fortunate. My mom and my husband both spoiled me a lot. I'm lucky to have married my husband, otherwise, I would have divorced for who knows how many times because of my bad temper. My husband and I walked into Avatamsaka Vihara in its previous location in Maryland, and we attended several

利蘭州的老華嚴精舍，參加過幾次法會，但因為工作太忙，就沒有繼續下去。自從三年半前同修得了癌症，高醫生知道後帶我們到華嚴精舍做供養，參加法會，並指點我們開始念佛，這才真正開始進入佛門修行，而我已是個八十老嫗了。

同修發心念佛才三年多，往生時出現如此瑞相，我認為是因為他的誠心念佛所致，加上他一生為人非常厚道，結了許多善緣。我自知以前開餐館多年，造業太多，所幸同修當時工作繁忙，並未參與餐館業務，所以他的福報比我大。同修從生病一直到走都沒有感到痛苦，走時面色柔和，微微帶笑，就像是睡著了一般，以至於我至今都不覺得他真的走了。

我如世人一般愚癡，不諳因果業報，總是想努力賺更多的錢，在貪嗔癡中打轉，前業未消又造新業，非要等時候到了，才會覺悟，想想真是可憐可嘆！這次佛菩薩藉著同修往生，讓我親眼見證佛法真實不虛，現在的我除了誠心懺悔往昔所造諸惡業，每天也更加精進誦經念佛。2018年十一月十八日到二十五日，華嚴精舍舉行佛七法會，我帶著行囊住到精舍，每天早上三點半起床，晚上十點半睡覺，結結實實，誠心誠意的打完佛七，竟發現困擾我多年的舊疾—頭痛消失了，原來寸步難行的腿也好多了，這都要感恩佛菩薩的慈悲加持，也見證「老實念佛」此話不虛，想到普賢菩薩的偈頌：「當勤精進，如救頭然，但念無常，慎勿放逸。」以此與諸佛友共勉之。❀

Dharma sessions. Due to our busy work schedule, we discontinued going there. After my husband was diagnosed with cancer three and a half years ago, Dr. Gao took us to Avatamsaka Vihara to make offerings and attend Dharma sessions. She also taught us how to chant the Buddha's name. This was the genuine starting point for us to enter the gate of Buddhism. However, by this time I was already an eighty-year old woman.

Having only chanted the Buddha's name for just over three years, my husband turned out to have such great blessings to be taken to the Western Pure Land by the Buddha. I believe it is because of his sincerity and kindness towards people, generating many good affinities throughout his life. I know I have created a lot of bad karma due to managing restaurants for many years. Luckily, due to his busy work, my husband did not involve himself in the restaurant businesses. That is why he has more blessings than I do. My husband never felt any suffering from the beginning of his sickness to the end of his life. When he passed away, his face looked gentle and he had a mild smile, just as if he were falling asleep; even now, I still can't believe that he's left us.

Without understanding the law of cause and effect, I am as ignorant as worldly people. Just like them, I have always tried to make more money while helplessly revolving in the cycle of greed, anger, and delusion. Before eliminating my old karmic offenses, I kept creating new ones. Only when the right conditions ripened did I come to such a realization — how pitiful and lamentable! Now, through my husband's passing, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have allowed me to witness the power of the Buddhadharma. Currently, I not only sincerely repent for the evil karma that I have committed in the past, I also recite the sutras and chant the Buddha's name more diligently every day. From November 18 - 25, 2019, I attended Avatamsaka Vihara's seven-day Amitabha session whilst staying there. I woke up at 3:30 am and went to bed at 10:30 pm everyday, steadily and sincerely attending each session. When the session was over, to my surprise, the long-term headache I had been suffering disappeared and my ability to walk improved a lot. I am grateful for the compassionate support of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas for all of these responses. Thus, I witnessed yet again the power of "earnestly chanting the Buddha's name." This made me think of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva's exhortation: "Practice diligently, as if your head is on fire; keenly be mindful of impermanence, and never be lax!" I hope what I have just said encourages all Dharma friends! ❀